

**IN  
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CASE...**

**EDITED BY  
MURRAY H. LEIFER**



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## A Study of Ministerial Leadership in Problem Situations

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*To That Noble Company of Men  
The Christian Ministers  
of America*



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## PREFACE

EVERY minister aspires to be a leader of people. Indeed, the members of his church and community expect him to furnish direction for the church and advice to the countless individuals who come with their problems. Yet the tragedy of many a pastor's life is that he finds himself incapable of meeting the demands placed upon him, or perhaps he discovers that leadership is no longer expected of him. In short, he has failed at one of the most crucial points of his work. It is with the hope of giving a new insight into the part which ministers may play in the community, the factors which give them leadership and those which limit their usefulness, that this book is written. Herein lies the explanation of the plan for the book. The first chapter attempts to set forth the assets which aid and the limitations which handicap a minister in his relationships with people. The remaining chapters are based on concrete problems faced in the work of the church, with solutions suggested by eminent ministers.

Years of work in the ministry, teaching of seminary students, and conducting of seminars for men in the active pastorate have demonstrated to the writer that the problems which arise in churches, large and small, urban and rural, fall into rather definite patterns. Though no two problems are exactly alike, after one has dealt with hundreds of cases he begins to discover these patterns. The superintendent of the church school whose resignation is long past due, the competing leaders in the women's organization,

the retired minister who interferes with the meetings of the young people's society, the inept young man who wishes to go into the ministry — we all know these people. Their names and circumstances differ from place to place, but the problems which they create show a marked "family" resemblance.

To make available the wisdom of experienced ministers who have dealt with such problems over a period of years, fifty specimen cases, covering many types of personal and group relationships, were assembled. These were submitted to a panel of ten pastors of recognized standing, in various denominations and different sections of the country. Each pastor was requested to describe the manner in which he would handle ten of these cases. In this book are presented the resulting hundred answers — two for each problem.

It is suggested that, after reading the statement of the problem and the two proposed solutions which follow, the reader take "time out" and consider how he himself would handle such a situation. In most instances there is no one "right" answer. Minor details which might be significant in the final settlement of the case could not be presented in the compass of one or two hundred words. Consequently there is room for difference of opinion; such differences clearly exist in some of the answers. These problems might well be discussed in a series of forums in the "Monday morning preachers' meeting" or by an individual minister with his laymen.

It may be protested that some of these cases are too difficult to solve. Nevertheless they are real situations and the minister who is confronted with them will be forced to act, whether prepared or not, for even negligence is a type of action which will influence the outcome of a case.

Neither the contributing ministers nor the editor claim

omniscience; but out of their experience they have diagnosed fifty cases and have sought to apply the principles of Christian ethics and social psychology to the solution of them. It is their hope that a careful consideration of such typical problem situations will aid alert people in fore-thinking, enabling them to deal more adequately with comparable issues when they arise.

Obviously such a book as this could not have been produced except for the cordial cooperation of many men, who took time from their crowded schedules to share the wisdom distilled from their years of ministry. The editor wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the contribution made by each of these ten men.

M. H. L.



## THE CONTRIBUTORS

EDWARD SCRIBNER AMES has spent most of his working years within the shadow of university walls. With degrees from Drake University and Yale Divinity School he came to the University of Chicago where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1895 in the field of philosophy. Since 1900 he has been the pastor of the University Church of the Disciples of Christ, adjacent to the campus of the University of Chicago. He has also been associated with the philosophy department at that university, where he is now professor emeritus. Since 1927 he has been dean of the Disciples Divinity House. In this stimulating and congenial atmosphere he has contributed to the thinking of many generations of students. He has written a number of books, the two most notable being *Psychology of Religious Experience* and *Religion*.

HUGH ELMER BROWN moved from the far west, where he took his undergraduate work, to Yale Divinity School for his seminary training. He was ordained as a Congregational minister in 1907. After two pastorates in Connecticut and another in Seattle, he was appointed in 1918 to the First Congregational Church in Evanston, Illinois, where he has served ever since. Not only is he the skillful and well loved pastor of a suburban congregation, whose peculiar problems he has taken pains to study and understand, but also a vigorous and active leader in his denomination, having been recently elected president of the Home Board of the Congregational-Christian Church. Progressive movements in fields of community betterment and church extension find in him an indefatigable supporter.

BERNARD CHANCELLOR CLAUSEN, after receiving his bachelor's and master's degrees from Colgate University, selected Union Theological Seminary for his ministerial training. On completion of his course he was ordained to the Baptist ministry in 1917. He served the First Baptist Church in Syracuse from 1920 to 1933. Since then he has been the pastor of the First Church in Pittsburgh, where he is a dynamic leader in both church and community. He is the author of many books, his latest one being *The A B C of the New Testament*.

JOSEPH MARTIN DAWSON received his training and has performed his labors in Texas. He has served in the ministry of the Baptist Church, South, since 1899. After three brief pastorates he went, in 1915, to the First Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, where he has remained. He has made extensive evangelistic and lecture tours, and has participated actively in denominational efforts throughout the area. He is the author of *Christ and Social Change*, as well as of other books.

IVAN LEE HOLT has lately received his church's highest mark of honor, having been made a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its 1938 General Conference. He holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. Numerous trips abroad have increased his opportunities for study and contact. He was ordained in the Methodist Church, South, in 1904, and since 1909 has served churches in Missouri, except for a three-year interval when he was professor of Old Testament literature at Southern Methodist University. Since 1918 he has been pastor of St. John's Church in St. Louis. He is a familiar figure in denominational and interdenominational circles, having been president of the Federal Council of Churches in 1936-37, president of the Church Federation of St. Louis, a member of the general board of education of the Methodist Church, South, etc. He is the author of *The Return of Spring to Man's Soul*.

RENWICK CARLISLE KENNEDY, a southerner by birth, has spent most of his life in the south. He has degrees from Erskine Theological Seminary, South Carolina, and from Princeton Theological Seminary. His active ministry began in 1925 with a pastorate in Russelville, Alabama. Since 1927 he has been pastor of the Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church at Camden, Alabama. He is a confirmed southerner and believes that the south must work out its own problems. For some years he has been a contributor to the *Christian Century*, the *New Republic*, and other periodicals.

JOHN HOWARD MELISH was graduated in 1895 from the University of Cincinnati and continued his studies at Harvard and the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was ordained as a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1899. After the completion of his theological training and a brief period of pastoral work in Cincinnati, he became in 1904 the rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Brooklyn, New York. For thirty-four years his genial personality, his social insight and his Christian spirit have been a leavening influence in Brooklyn.

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE secured his college and professional training at Ohio Wesleyan University and Drew Theological Seminary. He was ordained as a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1910 and served three pastorates before he was appointed in 1918 to the First Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois, where he has remained to the present. He has served this large suburban church in a university community with marked distinction. Possessed of an incisive mind and a sensitive social conscience, he has been in constant demand as preacher and lecturer in various parts of the country. He has also been active in work for peace and social welfare. Titles of his most recent books are *A World That Cannot Be Shaken* and *A Way to Life*.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ was eighteen years of age before he decided to desert his "career" as a professional boxer and enter the Christian ministry. In spite of the discouraging advice of ministers whom he consulted, he persevered in completing high school, college and seminary work. In 1926 he became the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Des Moines. At that time this church was contemplating moving from the center of the city to a more congenial residential area. Under the new pastor's vigorous and farsighted leadership the church began instead to serve its local community, with the result that it has increased rapidly in membership and vitality. This dynamic, warmhearted man has become known in Des Moines as one who is always ready to lend a hand to anyone in need.

HERBERT LOCKWOOD WILLETT studied at Bethany College, West Virginia, and at Yale before taking his Ph.D. degree at the University of Chicago in 1896, later doing postgraduate work at the University of Berlin. His working years have been divided between the pastorate and the academic world. From 1894 to 1929 he was associated with the University of Chicago as professor of Oriental languages and literature; he is now professor emeritus. From 1908 to 1920 he was minister of the Memorial Church of Christ in Chicago, while since 1926 he has been pastor of the Kenilworth Union (Community) Church. He is a contributing editor of the *Christian Century* and a widely known lecturer. Among his most recent books are *The Bible Through the Centuries* and *The Jew Through the Centuries*.

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# I

## THE MINISTER, A LEADER OF PEOPLE

AS PROMINENT as the steeple on the village horizon is the pastor of the village church. An attentive hearing awaits his words in the local councils. Although in the metropolis the cathedral may not dominate the skyline, even there its minister occupies an honored place. Reporters seek his opinions on current issues, politicians lend an ear to his strictures, business leaders are sensitive to his criticisms. In spite of the popular notion that the influence of organized religion is on the wane, there is no other person in the urban community or the rural area to whom men and women in distress would rather go. Townsfolk and strangers alike expect to find an attentive ear and kindly consideration from the parson or the priest.

THE MINISTER'S ROLE. Ministering is more than preaching. The pastor must not only lead his people in the performance of sacred rites, preach the religious verities, train children and adults in the traditions and inner meaning of the Christian life, but also see to it that the gears of the organization do not grind unduly. More than this, the people of the community, whether members of his church or not, nonchalantly assume that he will be ready to aid them with their personal problems and will be at hand to perform the ceremonies of marriage and burial. Moral and civic issues, of community and even national scope, must also be his concern. When the family welfare

society conducts its annual drive for funds, when an ordinance is needed for the regulation of the motion picture theaters, when a slum clearance project is in the offing, when a peace program is being developed, or when a change in the school board or the city administration is deemed necessary, it is taken for granted that the minister is already informed and will be available as a leader.

The traditions of the profession and the expectations of the community bring obligations which the religious leader, as the recognized and responsible head of a significant social organization, cannot shirk. Being a minister, he can no longer enjoy the privileges of anonymity and count himself an average private citizen. He speaks not only for himself, but also for his church. He is not only a person; he is also a community function.

**THE MINISTER'S RESOURCES.** It is not without reason that the minister has come to play such a role and that his advice is sought on personal, familial, and social problems. He has resources of prestige, power and training which enable him to approximate the fulfillment of the community's expectations:

(1) The long and honorable history of the Christian church, its traditions and rituals, the insight of its prophets, the sacrifices of its martyrs, the devotion of generation after generation of common people who have found in it help, comfort and courage — all these form a mysterious aura, a cloak of power which enfolds even the humblest of its ministers. Even an awkward and inept preacher is vested with an authority not of himself when he quotes a pregnant passage from the Bible or cites the example of the illustrious heroes of the church.

(2) Scarcely less ancient than the church and almost as impressive is the profession of the ministry. Through the years high standards have been established and compliance

has been demanded both by ecclesiastical organizations and by the community. To begin with, a universal requisite is strict adherence to an exacting code of personal morality. In the main, the minister has been expected to impose rules of intellectual and spiritual discipline upon himself. If he be slothful or careless, he may be rebuked by his superiors; in any case he loses caste with his colleagues. It is against the unwritten but certain code of ministerial ethics for a pastor to seek his own advantage. Instead, the obligation to serve not merely the members of his own flock but the whole community, to sacrifice himself, his interests, his time and his money on their behalf, is accepted as part of the normal routine of living. Priests and pastors have embraced these standards for themselves for so long a time that the community, without praise or comment, assumes them to be right and natural. And unless clergymen overtly break these unwritten rules, they enjoy the prestige which membership in such a distinctive profession alone can give.

(3) A further advantage possessed by the minister may be his denominational affiliation. This is a significant factor only where the denomination itself is potent, because of its large membership or because of prestige based on the high per capita income and social rating, or perhaps on the piety, of its members.

(4) The modern religious leader has an advantage over his itinerant, circuit-riding predecessor. He finds himself appointed to serve a congregation which is already established and which ordinarily has an edifice for its meetings. Someone is expecting him. He has the support of an organization — an organization with a history in the community. His position assures him a hearing not only within his own institution but in the community as well.

(5) Time was when the minister of the village church

was the most literate and best-educated citizen in the neighborhood, whose bookshelves the local schoolteacher counted it a privilege to peruse. Although more persons now enjoy the benefits of an education and nearly every town has its public library, the minister in most communities is still recognized as one of the intellectual leaders. He probably has been to college and taken a broad cultural course covering both arts and sciences; and perhaps he has even been to the seminary for three years of graduate professional study. In addition to the formal intellectual discipline of lecture hall and seminar room, he has developed certain abilities: to speak in public without embarrassment, to meet people of all classes and castes with ease and understanding, and to work out problems with a degree of ingenuity. A measure of patience, tolerance, and a lively sense of humor are assets of many a minister which induce in his parishioners confidence, respect and appreciation.

Possessed of such resources, the minister is enabled to play the part expected of him by the community — pastoral as well as priestly — to assist people in the solution of their life problems, to quicken the community conscience in matters of morality and of service, and to develop and maintain a smoothly functioning organization. Like any other well intentioned leader, he earnestly seeks to leave the world in which he lives a better place because of his activity. He is no puppeteer, cleverly pulling the strings to manipulate figures on a stage; neither is he a Machiavelli, attaining his own ends even though he thwart the development of others. To him each individual is a distinct personality; usually he recognizes the glorious potentialities behind the masks of indifference, selfishness and sophistification. His is the technique of education, of persuasion, of pointing out the guideposts to the better life, in the

confident expectation that people will respond to his appeal. He knows something of the vexing, baffling problems which face his people, and feels obligated by his position as a Christian pastor to assist them in the attainment of Christian selfhood.

**LIMITATIONS.** The perfect minister, embodying all of the virtues and skills prescribed for the profession, is a mental construct and not a flesh-and-blood reality. In one way or another we are all earth-bound, the minister included. Physical, mental and cultural limitations circumscribe our development and consequently our effectiveness, particularly if we aspire to leadership. Fortunately, the list of factors which contribute to strength of character, richness of personality, and professional achievement is almost endless and even though a man may have a low rating when judged by certain of these criteria, it is possible that his composite score will be high. Shortness of stature or a crippled leg constitutes something of a handicap for a minister entering a new community, but if he has an attractive personality and possesses other necessary attributes, this physical deficiency will first be overlooked and then forgotten.

Not every man who feels called to serve the Lord has been blessed with a brilliant mind. Some are dullards and have not been able to benefit even by the measure of training they have received. However, sheer brilliance does not necessarily make for success in the ministry, for though a man have the mind of a Phillips Brooks but lack his sympathetic understanding of the vicissitudes of commonplace humanity, he may be an illustrious lecturer but will become neither a great preacher nor a successful minister.

Any of a large assortment of unpleasant physical traits may prove a handicap — for example, the appearance of unhealthiness, a pasty complexion, slouching posture, or

neglected teeth. A blast of offensive breath, caused by poor digestion or the use of strongly flavored foods, *should not* perhaps have any influence on a loyal parishioner; but it *may* ruin an interview or offend a sensitive person, as he steadily retreats to keep out of range. Some disagreeable physical habits result from nervous tension and inability to relax. Twitching mouth or constantly moving hands, stroking of the face or nose, may prove irritating and distracting to even a patient congregation. Equally displeasing to discriminating people are spotty clothes, a dandruff-flecked coat, soiled linens, dirty fingernails and unshined shoes. An inveterate eater-out, the preacher needs to make dining an art; this he cannot do if he is given to gluttony. A man may feel that he is too busy bringing in the kingdom to be concerned about such trifles as these; yet because of his carelessness he may disgust and estrange many whose support he needs.

The social amenities vary from place to place, but if the minister is not among the best-mannered in his community, he will alienate a portion of his following. The easy and unobtrusive observation of the rules of etiquette is a requisite for a community leader. He should know how to perform introductions and acknowledge greetings. No one expects the pastor to be a Beau Brummel, but he should be at his ease in the presence of a group of women. One who cannot receive a favor or graciously express appreciation, who is unable to forgive a social error or thoughtlessness in others, who cannot in good humor take a joke at his own expense, falls short of the standard for the perfect minister, and to that extent fails as a leader of people.

Youth and inexperience are inevitably a limitation during the beginning years of a man's ministry, but the passage of time should broaden his experience, deepen his

sympathies, and increase his value to the church. Unfortunately physical adulthood does not always bring social and spiritual maturity, and vestiges of emotional instability may remain; temper tantrums, intolerance and intransigence make many an adult appear juvenile. A minister who pouts or is sullen or unforgiving is still a mental adolescent and will be so regarded. One who feels inferior or is uncomfortable in the presence of others is handicapped at the very start of his work with people. Timidity and boisterousness (and, incidentally, either may be caused by a feeling of social insecurity) are equally deplorable. Bashfulness may increase the charm of a young girl, but it is no asset to the leader of a church.

Occasionally a man who is deficient in imagination or who lacks a sense of humor finds his way into the ministry. Unless he is exceptionally blessed in other regards, he will probably prove a net loss to the church. He may develop a "preacher" tone and manner, little realizing how his unctuousness alienates the young people. Or he fails to see the devastating effect of his habit of gossiping. Or he often offends by his bluntness and his intolerance of the views of others. Such a man would be more suited for some other vocation, where contacts with his fellows are fewer in number and more routine in pattern. The minister needs imagination and sensitiveness. He should be something of a poet, finding beauty in a foggy day or in an old man's face, capable of sensing the pathos in a broken doll or the courage of a blind man crossing the street.

It has been repeatedly demonstrated that an occasional man with little education or training can achieve leadership; further, that some are failures in spite of all the aids that schools can give. Nevertheless the unexceptional minister who is also deficient in educational background and professional training finds his influence restricted and

his usefulness curtailed. One who has never acquired an understanding and appreciation of English literature, whose knowledge of history and the social sciences is meager, will inevitably appear at a disadvantage in conversational groups or when speaking about the world in which men live. Either he has nothing to say or he speaks without adequate background. To the extent that the minister is culturally inferior to the best-educated of his parishioners, to the extent that he fails to understand people and their individual and institutional needs, he will be handicapped as a leader of men and will be unable to serve effectively in molding the life of individuals and society. To be sure, attendance at college or seminary does not necessarily involve securing a broad education. Men may be so busy enjoying extra-curricular activities or earning their living that they fail to benefit by the courses to which they are exposed. Good habits of study and the maintenance of an ordered routine for the day are as necessary as a knowledge of the specific techniques for managing a church.

The very size and complexity of the minister's responsibility is itself a limitation. He cannot be a specialist in all fields and yet men and women from every walk of life and with an endless array of personal and group problems come to him for help. He must keep in mind that a request for advice is a subtle form of flattery and resist the temptation to appear omniscient; he will not claim to know the complete and final answers to all of life's questions. Wise is the minister who recognizes his own limitations and does not aim to take the place of the lawyer, the physician or the psychiatrist.

It is considered part of the pastoral duty to enunciate ideals and standards for Christian living in a social world. There is always a danger, however, that a man will be tempted to speak beyond his knowledge when presenting

a detailed plan for the solution of a social wrong. Unless a preacher is as well versed in economic problems, for example, as his laymen, it would be advisable for him to rest content with the enunciation of the basic Christian principles involved and leave the specific application to those who are better informed concerning the intricacies of a complex economic system. Occasionally a minister has taken the trouble to undergo a rigorous discipline to achieve a mastery of such issues; then and only then is he prepared to speak authoritatively.

The world often complains that the minister spends too much time in an ivory tower of his own creation. Actually society insists on setting him in a class by himself. The factory worker or the farmer tends to assume that, since the pastor or priest always appears in "street clothes" and seems far removed from the grease and dirt of labor, he leads a sheltered life and knows little of the everyday worries of common folk. He has much freedom, he does not need to be on the job at seven-thirty in the morning, neither does he punch a time clock. It is not surprising that many laymen resent this "softer" life of the minister. Such reactions erect about the churchman barriers which may seriously limit his usefulness. The laity is entitled to an intelligent interpretation of the function of the minister in the community, and the preacher himself must undertake the responsibility for imparting this.

**THE MINISTER AS LEADER.** In spite of his limitations—and every minister, like every layman, has a few—his position and resources are such that he finds himself thrust into a position of leadership. Some preachers might more appropriately be spoken of as headmen, or administrative functionaries. They follow in the well established grooves, keeping the machine operating and performing the tasks which are conventionally assigned to them. Such a man

has a goal in life, but it is set for him by his profession and his church. He is by virtue of his office the spokesman for the group, but he contributes little in the way of creative, dynamic leadership. He presents neither aims nor programs which are distinctively his own. Under him nothing very significant, whether for good or for ill, occurs in the organization. The membership remains much the same year after year. Few young people are added, but on the other hand the oldsters are not offended at the preaching.

In contrast stands the minister who is a true leader. He is a creative personality who has an aim, works toward it, and succeeds in persuading others to accompany him on the journey. He is never contented with a static world or a static church but is on the alert to discover ways of improving the organization, strengthening the fellowship, stimulating to more conscientious service. His preaching is vital and aggressive. With such a man as minister, the community is kept constantly aware that a church with a message is in its midst.

Certain characteristics mark off the leader from the headman. In the first place, he has an objective toward which he is striving. Not all ministers who are leaders have the same goal in mind. Some are clever strategists working to enlarge the church membership, pay off the debt, or broaden the program. Some, evangelistic in their emphasis, marshal all their skills for the winning of souls. Some are devoting their best efforts to creating a Christian community and to training in ethical living. Others have that all too rare leadership ability of uniting these elements into one composite program for action, proving that organizational effectiveness is an aid to evangelization and that both are in harmony with the desire to train people in Christian social living. Whatever his goal may be, the preacher must have it clearly in mind and be able to visu-

alize it for his followers. He is more effective when the goal is made concrete and proximate; the objective must not seem visionary and must be in harmony with the basic conceptions of rightness and Christian morality.

The leader also has a plan for attaining his goal. Indeed, most leaders do not envisage new goals, but accept as their own the ideals and hopes which have demonstrated their universal appeal through the centuries. Usually the great contribution of the ministerial leader is to make the goal of the kingdom of God seem attainable and to set forth a method for its achievement. Equally important is his ability to enlist the enthusiastic support of men and women in the project. He is never at a loss to supply to his parishioners, young and old, opportunities for specific services which are suitable to their skills and which give them a sense of participating in a great endeavor. Men are as willing to sacrifice today as at any time in history, but they will give up their petty interests only in behalf of something which seems to them noble, worthy, and of timeless significance.

Knowledge of goal and mastery of method are not enough. A dynamic, attractive, sympathetic personality is equally essential. The pastor or priest must be able to feel within himself the fears of insecurity, the pathetic struggles, the heart-hunger of the people and voice for them their aspirations. He appreciates the elemental importance of personality and is concerned for the welfare of the individual as well as for that of the organization. The average man does not become a leader, partly because he is unsensitive to the suffering of anyone other than himself.

No organization will achieve marked success unless its leaders are able to maintain harmony in the rank and file. This is abundantly evident in any congregation, where opportunity constantly arises for tension and conflict between

organizations or between personalities. The minister is continually called on to exercise his sense of humor in addition to wisdom and tact in the adjudication of disputes between the members and the promotion of good will and understanding.

To such a minister — one who is a leader of his people in fact as well as in name — comes an endless array of problems, big and little. Not that more problems exist in his parish, but that people have confidence in and are attracted to a dynamic yet kindly man who knows the power of the Christian faith and has command of rich resources for the solution of human ills. The cases which are discussed in the following chapters are typical of the problems which such a minister is called on to handle. They cannot be solved by reference to an encyclopedia, for they deal with human beings in their relationships with one another, and no two cases are ever just alike. The longer a pastor has served a parish and the more intimate his knowledge of his people, the greater is the assistance that he can render to them and to the organizations within his church.

The calls made upon the minister are so diverse that he frequently has need of all the resources which the community affords. The good leader knows how to use the assistance of others, and does not hesitate to confess his own limitations. Within the town or city there are persons and agencies which stand ready to abet him in his ministry to the souls of men. The pastor is a community personality and is known as such to the judge and the chief of police, to the doctors and the county nurse. He makes it his responsibility to establish contact with the agencies whose aid he will need in solving the problems of parishioners. He goes farther afield than this, and places the man disabled by accident in touch with the state vocational rehabilitation service, enables the widowed woman to se-

cure a mother's pension, obtains for the elderly man who has lost his sight a special phonograph which will play records made expressly for the blind. (Hundreds of good books, including the Bible, are now in record form and can be borrowed free of charge.)

No matter how richly endowed with qualities of leadership a minister may be, he will not find himself too well prepared to cope with the many perplexing difficulties which arise within church and community. Every active, going organization presents an almost baffling procession of new, yet old, problems. The details may differ, but the patterns are surprisingly similar. Even though the members of the church are "marching upward to Zion," they obviously have not as yet reached perfection, and will continue to demand the skilled, conscientious leadership of consecrated ministers.

## II

### THE MINISTER AS A PERSONAL COUNSELOR

ALTHOUGH Protestant churches have officially dis- countenanced the practice of the confessional, their ministers have found it necessary to perform somewhat similar functions in the pastor's study. Protestants as well as Catholics are puzzled over age-old religious questions: the meaning of life, the nature of God, the problem of evil. They come with an infinite variety of personal and domestic problems, seeking counsel. They sometimes long for the feeling of catharsis which comes with a vocal confession and expression of repentance and the ensuing assurance of divine forgiveness.

In such contacts with his parishioners a minister will find some of his most trying and also his most rewarding experiences. In them his own faith will be tested as by fire and from them he may, if he is on the alert, gain many a suggestion for his sermons. Perhaps even more important, through the "Protestant confessional" he can give inestimable aid to his parishioners, helping them more in the quiet of his study than through a formal discourse.

If he would perform such functions for his people, the minister must meet certain prerequisites. He must be available, setting aside designated hours of the day—morning or evening—when the people know they will be able to find him, either at the church office or in his home. Unless he has some evening office hours, the men

of the congregation and community cannot have access to him. It is essential that the minister hold inviolate the confidences imparted by his parishioners. Irreparable damage will be done to individuals in the community and to the church if the minister indulges in gossip.

He will need to be a good listener. How often a person gains release from his worries just through telling his story; what he wants is an attentive and sympathetic ear, not advice. To be sure, there are individuals who secure a subtle and unwholesome satisfaction from telling and retelling their woes. They cannot be spotted at the first interview, but a second and third confessing of guilt or rehearsal of injustice is not to be encouraged, since this is a sign that the mulling over of the problem is taking the place of solution. In such an instance the minister will serve his parishioner better by acquainting him with what he is actually doing and by insisting on leading him to an analysis and specific solution of his basic difficulties, which may be quite different from the surface problem. Here the assistance of a psychiatrist may be required.

Some members of the congregation will come to the minister greatly distraught. For instance, a woman rang a parsonage doorbell with great insistence at one o'clock in the morning. She had been attending a revival meeting and had gone to the altar rail, but the second blessing had not come. Workers had prayed with her, but all to no avail. Finally they suggested to her that she must have committed "the unforgivable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost." Burdened with a feeling of guilt and unable to find peace, she routed her own pastor out of bed. With such an apparition in front of him, a minister not only has need of poise himself, but must be able to calm the frantic woman and impart to her a more wholesome point of view. A generous measure of what goes by the name of common

sense is as necessary as formal training for the minister. Nonetheless he should be acquainted with some of the literature in the field of personal counseling and be prepared to use the services of those community agencies which can assist him in meeting the specific needs of his people, for the minister cannot hope to be omniscient in all fields. It may be noted that there is not just one prescribed way in which a problem must be treated. The cases in this chapter illustrate the varying approaches made by men of different temperament and background.

Above all, the pastor must himself have a deep religious faith and experience. Only with such support will he be able to carry the burdens, his own and those which others pour out on him. A wise man has said that no one can greatly aid others who are in distress unless he has suffered deeply himself. Before he is in the ministry many years, the observant man will learn much concerning the meaning and religious significance of suffering. There are times when a problem cannot be solved but when a person may with the help of religious faith triumph over his infirmity or over his personal loss. Blessed is the minister who can build up such a faith in his people.

## CASE 1

The minister of an urban church led a series of discussions in the young people's forum dealing with problems of personal adjustment. One of the members, a spinster of some forty summers and older than the rest, came to him with a problem of her own. He had always thought of her as an energetic, resourceful person who was not troubled by introspective moments. In this interview, however, she revealed to him that especially in recent years she had been very lonesome. It was fun, she told him, to be independent when she was thirty, but now life seemed to stretch ahead of her as just one unending workday. Young people no longer accepted her as one of them. She was invited to few parties for, in spite of her vivacity, her married friends thought of her as a fifth wheel.

Can the minister and the church aid her in the solution of this problem?

I question whether it is good to add to the number of those who are "personally adjusted." They are in many cases cool, competent and selfish people. They need to be *unadjusted* to the world of skillful egotisms and thrust into the thick of the fight for a clean and kindly world. I wonder why any minister should bring to youth "problems of personal adjustment." Youth, with red blood galloping through its veins, is or should be feeling what Tennyson called "the large excitement of the coming years." Challenged by valorous idealism, youth will resolve its own inner tensions.

I wonder also why a woman of forty should be in a youth forum. That in itself may have helped to unsettle her.

The minister should of course bring both science and sympathy to her case. There is no reason whatever why she should regard herself as a suitable candidate for a psychopathic clinic. Millions of other women tread the same road, and a glorious company of them are happy travelers.

The minister will do well to form an organization of women in his parish which will bring together for work and friendship the women of this age group who find it inconvenient or uncongenial to meet with the regular women's guilds. Many churches now have such groups and they aid decisively in solving problems like this one. They provide a new frame of reference, new friendships and self-delivering objectives. They continually remind lonely spinsters that happy, achieving lives are not impossible to husbandless and childless women.

In this case, of course, it would be desirable to suggest to a few of her friends that she is in special need of stimulating social life, and unobtrusive ways of meeting the need could easily be devised.

The book by Miss Hillis, *Live Alone and Like It*—superficial though it is—and Thurber's *Let Your Mind Alone* might prove useful.

HUGH E. BROWN

There are problems of personal life that are incapable of being shared with anyone, and must be wrestled with by the individual himself. These are of varying character, and no one wholly escapes them. This woman may regard herself as being in a class different from that of her associates, in age, family life and daily interests. Yet she would be helped if she could understand that no life is immune from periods of loneliness and a sense of frustration. It is unpleasant, no doubt, to feel that one is on the fringe of the social group that means most to her, as the church seems to in this instance. But that estimate may be only her personal assessment of the facts, and not be shared by any of her associates, who may regard her with high appreciation and would be surprised and pained to know that she thought of herself as an "outsider." Perhaps she is far more necessary to her group than she imagines.

Even though her impressions of her value to others be correct, she should understand that the resources for happiness are found not so much in outward relations as within herself. The happiness that people enjoy is rarely the result of forces outside of themselves. Rather it depends on qualities and industries within one's own life. Probably there are others in that same church who would welcome such attention and friendly regard as this woman could offer. Bringing a sense of personal interest and helpfulness to them would tend to solve her own problem as well as theirs. She might even serve as the organizing center for a little group of friends or for a circle of children who could be entertained and made happy by such attention. Numbers of people in circumstances similar to her own have found ways to make their lives, seemingly lonely and useless, a means of helpfulness and pleasure to a few chosen acquaintances, a Sunday school class gathered from unattached young people or children, a nature-loving group, a hiking set, or some other knot of empty or wistful lives. The days are full of such opportunities.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

## CASE 2

A member of the church, the driver of a milk truck, slipped one icy morning as he tried to evade an onrushing car. He was struck and one leg was so badly crushed that amputation was necessary. The offending driver was not apprehended. The compensation which was allowed for the injury met the hospital expenses and took care of the needs of the family during the period of convalescence. Now, however, the man is without employment and the family resources are practically exhausted. Further, the man and his wife are dispirited and have lost their grip on life. What material and spiritual aid can the church and the minister offer in such a case?

This is one of the great tests of the Christian spirit. For the minister, the opportunity is obvious. Here are people to whom his pastoral ministrations can make a tremendous difference. A daily brief call, to reassure them concerning his personal interest, until this crisis is past, would help. But with this must go all the skill and compassionate planning which his ingenuity can dictate. Is the man incapable of any form of employment? He must be kept busy at something. Could the woman work? What they both need is a sense of belonging worthfully to a busy world. Preparing and selling greeting cards, salesmanship by telephone, home manufacturing or craftsmanship, even some semiprofessional work for the church, like maintaining a telephone contact with the members on behalf of the pastor, or assisting in a first-class businesslike keeping of the records, on a small stipend, might be possible. A milk truck driver knows bookkeeping and salesmanship, and all is not gone when a leg is amputated. But if a solution in permanent terms cannot be reached in time, then the church should assume that home as its charge, and from the general funds, or from special contributions levied from people able to pay, these tragically hurt people should be maintained. By the way, this church in Case 2 does not happen to be the same church as described in Case 16, does it? What a combination those two situations would make!

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

Clearly the church and pastor must, by visitation and temporary aid, express practical sympathy with the injured man and his family. In addition they should endeavor to interpret the Christian philosophy of suffering in a manner to console and reinforce the unfortunate man and

his family. If he is a Christian believer this will mean much.

But here is a case where social techniques must be used in adjusting the victim of this misfortune toward a new vocation and where other members of the home must cooperate sympathetically in the solution of the problem. The family welfare organization should assist in rehabilitating the home on a new basis, helping to find for the crippled man suitable employment, a task which may involve instruction in his new vocation,\* a modest beginning and an extended period of partial support. If the children are old enough, some proper kind of child labor for them and some form of remunerative work for the wife could be provided.

Under modern conditions the individual may be helpless to manage his case alone, and the church, even with the most sympathetic attitude, may not be able by itself to cope with the situation. What is demanded is some sort of community cooperation and the use of the techniques of social workers who are trained to deal with such cases and are able to provide the relief needed.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

### CASE 3

One of the finest young women in your choir has become engaged to a young man whom you and others in your church recognize to be an unreliable braggart and a dissolute fellow. However, he dresses well, talks fluently, and has quite a manner with the ladies. The girl, the only child of devout and cultured parents, has lived a carefully regulated life under the

\* Assistance in retraining can frequently be secured through the state board for vocational rehabilitation. Forty-four states cooperate with the federal government in this project. (Ed.)

strict disciplining of her father. Egged on by the young man with whom she is infatuated, she is now at the point where she will flout her parents' authority and get married in spite of their objections. Would you offer her any advice? If she on her own initiative should seek your counsel, what would you say?

If the young woman came to me on her own initiative for counsel, it would be fair to suppose that she realized something of the seriousness of the situation and was anxious to talk to a sympathetic person about it. After commending her concern for her parents' attitudes as well as for her own happiness, I would try to secure her confidence, to get her to talk freely of the young man, his habits, and the "tall stories" he must sometimes have told her. If she admitted his frailties I would suggest the difficulties and unhappiness to which they might lead, the danger of "marrying a man to reform him," and the wisdom of trying to see him through the eyes of some of her best friends. I would point out the long consequences of momentary deeds and advise her to take a little more time to consider the matter, suggesting that she be away from him for a while, perhaps for a few weeks. Possibly it would be advisable for her to tell him that she is really worried about certain of his ways and propose that he go straight for a year, establishing himself favorably in the eyes of the community for her sake and the sake of their future interest. If he has stamina and real love for her he will be willing to do something to convince her and her parents and friends that he can be worthy of her. It might be helpful to discuss similar cases which she or I might know, which would offer facts to arrest her attention and make her *think*.

If I thought I were making any headway in getting her to see herself and the young man with some detachment,

then I would endeavor to discover which of her parents had the deeper hold on her affection, and in what way she felt the greatest obligation to them. Their attitude, she must know, is motivated by genuine concern for her and is not merely an expression of parental authority or selfishness over her leaving them to make a home of her own. I would urge her to talk to them freely and as objectively as she could, and also to talk to some older person not of the family, an uncle or aunt. I would also advise her to "talk to God about it all."

If the young woman does not ask advice, it may be possible to lead her into conversation about the problem by easy inquiry through a seemingly casual question upon meeting her: "How are you these days?" "How are you getting along?" "What are you planning to do this summer?" If I were well acquainted with her and her family, some question of this kind might lead to a frank statement of the whole situation which would open the way to confidence and understanding. Direct criticism, reproof, moralizing, pleading, seldom can be effective under the conditions described in the problem.

EDWARD S. AMES

The pastor made it a point immediately upon hearing of the engagement to consult the parents as well as both of the young people. The father, bitterly disappointed, is prostrated over the affair and is, to begin with, the minister's deepest concern.

The young woman having been carefully nurtured in the church has had definite instruction concerning the intricate questions of life. The pastor had presented to her the teachings of the church. She is now reminded of "the commandment of the Fireside, the Home," and the primal words, "Honor thy father and thy mother." The storm is

raging in her soul, the foundations are being tested. She also realizes that "the commandment of Profoundest Depths," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," has been violated by her lover. In spite of all this she is resolute and, for better or worse, is ready to stand by her convictions.

The young man also has been consulted. He now finds more than ever that he loves the girl. He is painfully open about his former sexual affairs with two women, though he is not diseased. "From this moment on, that is a closed chapter in my life."

By this time the case has become an open book to the family, the pastor, and the parties directly involved. To relieve the family and the pastor of further embarrassment, the young woman makes the suggestion that they be married away from home, across the state line. This the father thinks appropriate, as all kind admonition has been cast to the wind. However, the pastor pleads for further consideration on this question and above all for a church wedding. This is arranged for, the invitations sent out by the family, and everyone is busy; the breach, not healed, is beginning to mend. It now has become the problem of the home and the church, instead of an affair between two young people.

The day of the wedding arrives. There is an early evening ceremony in June. The bridal couple catch a glimpse of the arms of "The Inviting Christ" through the gorgeous blues of the great central window. The pastor has learned long ago the solemnity of marriage, and the soft mystical lights illumine his face when, with a sincere expression, he meets them at the altar. (Candles always burn for every wedding, whether in the church or in the parsonage. They are effective in producing an ideal setting.) Now, if ever, the pastor's great moment has come; the battle already has been fought out in his soul. He is wrestling against prin-

palities to establish a Christian home. This time he does not "read the service," but has it definitely committed to memory.

"Wilt thou, James Garfield, take Betty Lou, here present, to be thy wedded wife? Wilt thou love and comfort her, honor and keep her, and in joy and sorrow preserve with her this bond, holy and unbroken until death? If so, you may answer, 'I will.'" The clear tone of the young man's voice can be heard everywhere by the assembled friends. The same questions are put to the bride and, somehow, the pastor feels that his act is in harmony with God.

"At this time we shall have the service of the rings. . . . With these two rings you do each other wed; they being endless are the symbols of eternity. Thus enduring be the affections, one for the other. The precious metal symbolizes the holy estate of wedlock.

"Forasmuch as you both have given each to the other your holy pledge of love and fidelity, before God and these assembled loved ones and friends, I, as a minister of the church of Christ, declare you, James, to be the husband, and you, Betty Lou, the wife, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." They kneel for the prayer, and as they arise after the benediction, the pastor catches a gleam of the tears running down their faces.

A parting word in the sacristy. "Remember, James, she is a good girl, she is worthy of your best. This church always takes an interest in her married people. Let's see it through together. Read over the parts in the booklet pertaining to the home. You know, James, there are three homes, all a gift of our heavenly Father. Our earthly home, our church home, our heavenly home. Some day this earthly home shall be broken . . . the heavenly home

awaits all loving and consecrated hearts. Remember, Betty Lou is God's gift to you; the marriage relationship on its highest level is sacramental; when dragged to the dust it is bestial."

Three years after the ceremony James joins the church through a course of adult instruction. Nothing has ever been forced. Life is unfolding itself in its beauty. On Palm Sunday he is received with seventy-five other adults and after the service thanks the minister with the words, "This is absolutely the greatest day of my life." Betty Lou, whose prayers have been answered, agrees. Father and mother are beside themselves with joy. The former things have passed away. After the sixth year, through merit, he takes his place on the church board. Three children have been born during the ten years of their married life. The Church and Home have become supreme.

"Who is that stunning-looking usher?" asks a young woman on Easter morning of her girl friend, after they have been assisted to their pew.

"That is James Garfield Smith, one of the finest men in this city."

He still has a winning way with the ladies and, if anything, is more exact in his dress than ever before.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

#### CASE 4

A man who has been active in the program of your church is married to a woman who is aflame with revivalistic passion. She is a highly emotional person who enjoys nothing more than participating in evangelistic meetings, where she will usher, sing in the choir, or exhort. As a result of neglect her home is untidy and she has little time for the routine of mending and cooking. There has been much friction between husband and wife, and occasional threats of divorce on the part of each.

The husband has told you that his wife is particularly anxious to adopt a child, but he thinks it fortunate that there are no children in such a disorderly home. However, under the pressure of her constant haranguing, he has agreed to apply with her at a child placement agency. You now receive a letter from the agency, asking whether a child should be placed in the home. What will your response be and how would you justify it?

*Child Placement Agency*

*Pineville*

**GENTLEMEN:**

Your letter of inquiry about Mr. and Mrs. Johnston received.

I recommend that you let them have the child.

They are good people. They are members of my church. I know them well. They have an income adequate to support and educate the child.

You, no doubt, are interested only in the child. I, too, am concerned that you place your children in good homes. But I also am interested in the applicants. A child, I believe, will make of them two very fine parents.

They have been married fifteen years. For the past ten years they have not been happy. Mr. Johnston is an uninspired and somewhat stolid individual, but a man of character and kindness. His wife is a person of much greater sensitivity and intelligence. She has never had much to do in the marriage partnership except to keep house. The husband lacked the imagination to see her need for occupation and responsibility. Save for her household duties Mrs. Johnston has lived in idleness for fifteen years. Now she has lost interest in her housekeeping.

Her present attempt to fill her empty neurotic life with church work is rapidly changing a good woman into an officious religious fanatic. I have seen the same thing occur

in the cases of many childless women, both married and single.

Give her a child, preferably an infant that will require twenty-four hour attention. I am convinced that she will make a good mother. I also believe that a child in this home will save it from possible divorce, and will save a fine woman from an unhealthy religious psychosis.

This, in my opinion, is a home that is literally starving for a child. A child will redeem it, and will make in it a place of love and happiness for itself.

Yours very truly, (Rev.) Percy X. Smith  
RENWICK C. KENNEDY

In earlier days there were no social service agencies and all responsibility for personality adjustments rested on the church. Today nothing is more important to a minister than the maintenance of close contact with such organizations in his community. If the minister under discussion has an understanding of the work of a child placement agency, and if the social worker has come to respect the minister's judgment, it may be possible to reach a solution of this problem.

A minister finds it difficult to tell any person that he is too emotional in his expression of religion. In general we do not have enough emotional coloring in our religion, and yet some people have far too much. If the minister cannot say to the couple desiring to adopt a child what he should say, he can discuss the matter with the placement agency and tell the social worker what his investigation reveals. This is not an unfair shifting of responsibility. It permits the social worker to stress the excitement and inattention in the home as reasons for the decision not to place a child there; on the other hand, if the minister made such a statement to her, the woman would feel that he was criticizing her religious interest.

What if there is no social agency in the community? Suppose the couple go to a neighboring city and seek a child for adoption? Sooner or later in the investigation the minister will be asked his opinion and he must give it. If it becomes necessary for him to do so he will have to tell the woman frankly what he thinks. Involved in his decision is not only his relation to a couple in the church, but the future of a child. No child can grow to normal maturity in such a disordered home, and no minister can fail to accord the child the place of significance which his Master gave to children.

IVAN LEE HOLT

#### CASE 5

A church member who has been trying earnestly to live an ethical Christian life goes to his minister with a baffling problem. He is employed in a small factory. The superintendent of the plant has asked him to circulate quietly among the men, learn of any union activities and report back to the office. He is offered a pay raise if he agrees to do this. Not desiring to acquiesce, and yet fearing he will lose his job if he does not, the man has asked for a few days in which to think over the matter. In this interval he has come to you for advice. His financial reserves are meager, he feels that he dare not risk unemployment, but he is equally unwilling to play "stool-pigeon."

There is, of course, only one decision which a Christian, in this situation, can afford to reach, which is that he will not consent, for any consideration, to betray his fellows. But he, having made this decision, should not be left to bear alone the costly consequences of his act. The Christian fellowship should come to his assistance, helping him to secure other employment and, meanwhile, sharing his financial load. Unhappily, it is at present hardly to be expected that any church would officially undertake to do

this. Modern Christianity, unlike that of the first three centuries, has had but little experience in the way of cross-bearing in behalf of imperiled brethren. But at this point the modern minister is surely called upon to do something more than give his blessing to a faithful member of his flock. Let him organize at least a small group within the church to take care of just such emergencies, of which there are likely to be many in years immediately ahead.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

This workman obviously feels that he can pursue only a course of action which will be consistent with his Christian principles and conscientious convictions. The following possibilities seem to me open to him: (1) He may decline to interview his fellow workmen, insisting that this does not mean that he definitely wishes to "take sides" on behalf of union agitation if such exists. (2) He may make the investigation and refuse to accept a raise in pay for it. (3) He may consent to find out all he can, but reserve the right to pass any judgment himself upon the claims of either side, agreeing to state fairly the claims of both sides to representatives of both, to be carefully chosen by the employer and the workmen.

In the latter instance he would be willing to gather all the facts available as to wages and working conditions in relation to the needs of the men and their families, and in relation to the justifiable demands of the business, such as markets, the volume of business, competition, and profits on investments. Such methods have been followed through the agency of arbitration boards in many industries over long periods of time and with satisfaction to both parties. As the case is stated there is some reason to think that such a plan might be favorably considered. It is a "small factory," which means that the employer is more

likely to be appreciative of the human elements involved. This employee has been chosen to seek the information presumably because his superior has confidence in his intelligence and character. He is therefore a person whose judgment and influence have weight with the management and with labor. If either side refuses to look at the facts or listen to reasonable proposals, then evidently conditions exist in the industry which need changing, for the sake of the employer, the employees, and the general public. It may be that the men have been influenced by extreme labor propaganda. If so, the sources of it can be discovered and any unfair representations offset by the facts and by open conferences. Unwillingness on the part of the employer to consider such a course would threaten a strike, certain to be costly to him in many ways. The workman selected to make the inquiry is placed in a difficult position, one which requires thoughtful, tactful, and courageous procedure, but it offers opportunity to do something constructive. It involves serious risk but that is the nature of all real moral situations.

EDWARD S. AMES

#### CASE 6

A dull-minded but earnest young man of twenty-five, who is a regular attendant at the church services, informs his pastor that he feels called to enter the work of the Christian ministry, and asks advice as to how he should proceed. He is a high school graduate and is at present employed as a clerk at the railroad depot. He has given little evidence of leadership ability and speaks hesitantly. It is evident in the interview that this decision has been a long time in the making and that he will be very disappointed if the minister should discourage him in his desires. What advice should the pastor give him?

The Reverend Percy X. Smith twisted about uncomfortably in his chair. Across the study desk Robert James Ellis didn't stir at all but sat calmly and heavily and filled with conviction.

"The Lord has called me to preach the gospel," he said with finality.

"That's between you and the Lord, Robert James," said Mr. Smith. "I do not deny that the Lord has called you. I can't enter into that. Only you can know."

"But I want you to be sure. I'm not discouraging you, Robert James, and I am not encouraging you," the preacher continued, lying a little because he was pouring all the cold water he could upon Robert James's plan.

"I want to tell you a little story. When I began to preach I spent one summer up in Iowa. There was a big fat boy up there in one of my churches who saw me riding by his field where he was plowing. I used a horse and buggy then. It seemed to him that I lived an idle and easy life, and before the summer was over he felt called to preach. That fall he went to college to make a start at preparing himself. In two months he gave it up and came home. Too homesick to stick it out. That ended his education and his preaching."

"Now, I don't say it's that way with you, but it may be that you have a wrong idea about a preacher's life. I drive an automobile and I preach to good crowds on Sunday morning and people are nice to me. It looks like a nice easy life, doesn't it?"

"But it isn't as easy as it looks. It took four years at college and three in a seminary before I started. Now, after a good many years, I don't make anything more than a living. It is hard steady work, and someone is always breaking my heart."

"You are twenty-five years old. Four years at college,

three at a seminary, and probably ten more in little out-of-the-way churches where you hardly make a living! You are not a good speaker. You will be forty-five years old before you have made much headway in the ministry. And for the next seven years you won't have an income. If you are going to be a Presbyterian preacher you ought to do it right, go to college and seminary.

"I'm just pointing out the difficulties. Of course, if you feel that the Lord has called you, and if all you are interested in is serving him, and if you don't care where you serve him or how much pay you get for it, then I say, go ahead.

"But you can serve the Lord right here in this town as a clerk with the railroad and as a member of our church. The Lord can use you right here."

Mr. Smith mopped his brow. He had spoken his convictions and his duplicity did not trouble him.

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

There are presumptive reasons why the young man, even though devout, should not be accepted into the Christian ministry, which demands men of gifts and training. Apparently, being dull, he has no distinct gifts; and being twenty-five with only a high school education, he is handicapped by lack of training which would take a long time for him to get.

Yet, it must be admitted, so great and useful a man as Dwight L. Moody at the first had much to discourage his entrance into the ministry. When a man is divinely called, it is humanly difficult to predict what is possible. In this case his pastor should searchingly counsel with this young man as to his call and faithfully interpret what may reasonably be regarded as a divine call before he should consent to the applicant's being accepted for the high pursuit of the gospel ministry. Perhaps it could be pointed out that

there are other phases of Christian service for which he would be adapted that would yield deep satisfactions and a full consciousness of God's approval. At any rate, I would advise that the young man be invited to try out his skills in such activities.

If after this trial he gives evidence of any usefulness and is not yet dissuaded from his conviction that he should preach, then perhaps the pastor and the church might decide that there are fields where one with humble qualifications might be usefully employed, and so yield to his request for license to exercise his powers — provided, of course, his moral and spiritual character warrants it. Such a course, in my judgment, would seldom result unfavorably to all interests concerned.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

#### CASE 7

A young man twenty years of age has just completed serving a term of three months in the county jail. He was sent there for stealing an automobile. Within a few days of his release he comes to your office and asks your help, stating that he is determined to "make good." He and his parents are members of your church, although his contact with it has been slight in recent years. Following your advice, he seeks to play a more active part in the young people's society, but meets with rebuff. He now comes to you a second time, asking your help. In what ways can you be of assistance to him?

"I am glad you are back again, William; there were some things I could not tell you the first time. It does my heart good to see you regularly at the services. I too have noted that some of the better young women are not enthusiastic about you. This cuts you deeply, but it is a part of the burden you must learn to bear. 'The way of

the transgressor is hard.' You can't side-step God's word. You are bitter, you feel society and especially the church are not willing to give you a chance. 'What is the church for, if it does not help a man in need?' you say. That is true, but there are two sides to this question.

"The courts dealt kindly with you for your misdemeanor because of your parents and your relationship to this church. Automobile stealing for a thrill has become a serious offense. In northern Illinois two hundred and fifty cars were stolen one week end. Don't expect me to clear this problem for you. I will give direction, but it is up to you to see it through. You brought a stain upon the church as well as yourself.

"You have always admired Oley Nelson, past commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, who died last week. You know he was the soul of honor; a finer man never lived. When his eye was removed at the hospital last year, he told me of a chapter of his early life. Sixty years ago he was quite a man physically. One night he got into a drunken brawl. A man struck him in the eye, causing almost complete blindness of that member. For sixty years that eye gave him trouble. His remark to me was: 'I am glad it is out. Reverend, God heals our wounds, but we must always bear the scars of our wrongdoings. Is it not a wonderful thing, however, that God forgives our shortcomings?'

"William, stand up and take this like a man. Remember always your sins are forgiven, but the scars remain. Make it a point from this day on never to let anything regarding your jail sentence stand in the way of your becoming a better man. If you let this matter destroy your confidence in womanhood and the church you are to be pitied, and there isn't much to you. If you continue to stand close to your pastor, we'll see this thing through

together, and if after a while some thoughtless person becomes offensive, he'll have both of us to deal with.

"What do you say to this? It's a fine day and I have two tickets for the Drake Relays; let's go out together!" With a grateful grin, Bill accepted. A young man was continuing his march onward in the kingdom.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

No individual in modern society faces a more difficult situation than a man who has been released from prison and desires to lead a decent life. Such a man feels that he wants to reestablish himself among the people who know of his wrongdoing, and naturally seeks some of the understanding and sympathy he used to find in his home community. The minister will seek to aid in this situation, but he must first make sure of the man's attitudes. Is he really sorry for what he did? Is he earnestly seeking to do the right, or is he experiencing merely the humiliation of one whose friends do not receive him as they should? Anyone who has dealt with wrongdoers knows that there is sometimes a tearful promise to lead a better life which is nothing more than a meaningless defense mechanism. A man may make his declarations of reform, and even ask the minister to pray with him, and then go out and commit another crime. This is truer of habitual criminals than of a first offender, but even a novice in crime may have lost the strength to screw his resolution to the sticking point.

When the minister is convinced that the released prisoner can keep his promise, then he must seek to prepare the man for criticisms, and even insults. In the community there is the firm which would never think of giving a criminal a job; there is the gossip who will not let the story of the crime end; there is the friend who feels he will lose

his position if he be seen in the company of a released prisoner. It will take a greater courage, perhaps, for him to maintain his resolve in the face of such attitudes than to refrain from committing another crime.

Now the minister's next step is to seek community co-operation. What can be done? (1) A man may be found who is willing to offer a job for such a youth, but it is the minister who will have to find him. (2) The minister must keep in touch with the situation and for a time have conversations at regular intervals with employer and employee, maintaining the morale of the latter and interpreting his aspirations and needs to the employer. (3) The minister will find that there are a few sympathetic young people on whom he can rely to give his friend some helpful social contacts and a feeling of being in the group.

I have known situations where the minister and the family decided it was best for the released prisoner to start life again in another community. Such a fundamental decision may depend in last analysis on the number and type of people in the community who were affected by the crime, and on the degree of social sensitivity of professing Christians. Wise is the minister who moves slowly, and yet keeps in mind persistently the goal of human rehabilitation.

IVAN LEE HOLT

#### CASE 8

Two women, mother and daughter, obviously nervous and disturbed, ask to talk to the minister on a "very personal" matter. It is soon clear that the young woman, though unmarried, is pregnant. The mother states that the daughter got in with a fast crowd, and that she would not want the girl to marry the young man involved, since he is a poolroom habitué and has no job. Both mother and daughter insist that they

wish to avoid the birth of the baby, advancing many reasons, and ask the minister how this end can be accomplished.

The minister, realizing the physical and mental hazards as well as the illegality of such an act, advises strongly against abortion. Ruling this out, what positive suggestions can he make?

The case cited is all too frequent an occurrence in modern society where family life has lost control of youth, and young women have the freedom which young men have long had. When the minister is confronted with it he should try to keep in mind all the factors involved: not merely the girl and her mother, but the child, the father of it, and the community.

The mother and her daughter in this case are both typical escapists; they would run away from the consequences of the daughter's conduct and, perhaps, the mother's failure to bring up her daughter in this new day of freedom. Nothing is gained by letting these women escape; nor by letting the young man, father of this child, go free, only perhaps to put some other girl in the same plight.

Marriage is no solution of this problem; it will probably end in the divorce court. But it will give the child a legal father, the girl a legal husband, and fix financial responsibility on the man for the upbringing of his baby. A "shotgun marriage" with divorce later is to be preferred to bastardy for the child and escapism for all others concerned.

Usually this case goes to the doctor rather than to the minister. And what doctors frequently do is to send the girl, when there is money for expenses, to a physician in another city; she returns home "from a visit," after the birth of her baby; and the child is put into a foundling institution or is adopted by some childless couple wanting a baby. In this latter case the child may stand a better chance of growing up well than with its own parents. In

the former case the community is saddled with the cost of this child which the parents escape. This also happens when the girl goes into a hospital for unmarried mothers in her own city and when the child is placed later with others. Some girls, however, have stood by like Fantine in *Les Misérables*. I have not known of a man standing by. There are cases where the parents of the girl have adopted the child as their own. Among the poor this is the general rule; among middle class people it is the exception. These last think of their own reputation, their own standing in the community, rather than of their daughter's character or their grandchild's future. Where the girl stands up to the consequences of her act and has maternal love, she can later move to another city, change her name and support her little one. Like Fantine she herself may become "virtuous and holy in the sight of God."

The minister should also remember that this girl may repeat this offense against high womanhood, childhood and the community; and he should drive home the lesson of this experience in order, if possible, that she may not do it again. Many women, and men, today think they know all about contraceptives. They should be taught that "in a larger proportion of cases contraceptive measures had been employed and failed." (See *Factors in Sex Life*, by Katherine B. Davis.) There is no solution of this problem except the moral solution of self-control and social responsibility. In Soviet Russia there is now a reaction against the loose sex relations which came in after the revolution. Only in the moral standards of Christ is personal and social salvation obtainable.

JOHN H. MELISH

Certain facts should be faced at the start. There must be no thought of abortion. It is not merely that in the sight of the law this would be a crime deserving of universal condemnation, but it would in no wise solve the problem. A mistake such as has been made could not be rectified by the crime of murder. The child that is expected is innocent of all wrong, and ought not to bear the brand of illegitimacy. A proper social order, while in no way approving the action of young people in breaking the laws of rectitude and self-respect, will not consent to punish the child for the mistake of its parents. Further, if the mother and daughter are convinced beyond question that the father of the child is wholly unsuited to be the head of a family, there should be no effort to force him into a marriage. Marriage in such a case would not solve the problem; it would only lead to a life of misery and regret. I should repeat, "convinced beyond question," for of course the simplest solution, if conditions at all warrant it, is marriage and a home. It may be that such a course will bring the man to a sense of responsibility and rectitude. If this is impracticable, the right and courageous procedure is for the young woman to bear her child, and rear it with all devotion, solicitude and love. It is her own flesh and blood, and she will never be happy should she do less. Numbers of young unmarried women are rearing children, either their own born out of wedlock, which is always to be regretted, or adopted out of pure desire to have children.

Society knows that few would deliberately enter extra-marital relations for the sake of bearing a fatherless child. But if through misadventure the child comes, or if it is sought by adoption, a proper public sentiment can only honor such a parentage. It is a situation in which publicity cannot be escaped. The world is sure to find out the facts.

But it will respect and honor the woman who meets frankly and honestly her problem, and atones for her error by a life of devotion to an otherwise dishonored child. And in all probability a suitable marriage and a happy home will be the sequel, for good men respect the heroism and sincerity of such a woman. And as for the arriving child, it has the right to be born and to be loved and nurtured. Here is an opportunity for a woman of the right sort to brave the comments of a shallow public prejudice, and to repair her mistake by a dignified and sensible procedure.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

### III

## THE MINISTER AND LAY LEADERSHIP

EVEN the smallest of churches, with its various societies and organizations — choir, Christian Endeavor, ladies' aid society and men's brotherhood — affords many humble people an opportunity for self-expression which they find in no other aspect of their life activity. The development of the leadership traits inherent within run-of-the-mill citizens, assisting them to become persons in their own right, is one of the greatest contributions the church can make in any community. Further, the average church could not exist without the active support of conscientious volunteers. Even though in the opinion of some experienced ministers it is desirable that church-school teachers and choir members should be employed for these specific tasks and paid for their work, in the vast majority of churches such functions must be performed by men and women who receive their compensation in the satisfactions accompanying the job.

It is obvious that in an organization which is dependent on the active support and leadership of unpaid workers — each with his own ideas and sensitivities and inconsistencies, some domineering, others easily offended and ready to resign — the minister will play an important role. Unfortunately some men, eager to dissolve tensions or eliminate some flaw in the church's organizational structure, apply sandpaper to the wound rather than a cooling anti-septic lotion. They rasp and jar the sensibilities of their

parishioners. Autocratic, opinionated men who speak in *ex cathedra* phrase are faced with constant difficulty in their church work. Even though they speak the word of the Lord, the seed will almost certainly fall on stony ground.

While there are issues and situations where confidence and firmness are needed, the minister must be ever ready to smooth rough edges and placate sensitive spirits, giving a word of advice here and there, interpreting the good intentions of Mrs. Maladroit, and making some appreciative comment to the timid girl who has led her first Epworth League lesson. He needs the skill of the business executive or personnel man, as well as that of pastor, prophet and priest. He must enlist and develop new leaders as well as encourage and stimulate others who are now carrying a share of the responsibility.

#### CASE 9

An amiable young man is the president of the young people's society. He is a clever "born leader" with an attractive personality. He has a sizable following among the young people and under his presidency the society has grown. Unfortunately, however, it seems to the minister that he is enjoying the thrills of leadership without accepting responsibility for the organization, and the young people's society seems to be drifting away from the church. This has been the occasion of much parental concern. What suggestions would you make in dealing with this problem?

I am myself convinced that the only real solution of this, as of many a similar, problem is the organization of a board of religious education for the entire (local) church. The membership of this board may be constituted of representatives of every unit of the society; as, for example, the church school, the women's missionary societies, the men's club, the Boy Scout troop, and the young people's

society. These representatives, according to the practice of the church, may be either elected by their several units or appointed by the minister, subject to the approval of his governing board. Thus constituted, the board, under the continuous guidance of the minister, should be expected to establish the educational goals and practices of the church and to coordinate the programs and activities of the several units. In this way alone, I feel constrained to believe, can the Protestant church in this country prevent the ridiculous, not to say tragic, situation which develops when a young people's society "drifts away from the church" or an adult Bible class becomes as "a tail that wags the dog." I am equally convinced that in this way alone can the modern church make its greatest contribution to the kingdom of God.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

Obviously the first thing for the minister to do is to go into a huddle with this young man, and work out some plays together with him. Maybe this glamorous chap, under skillful coaching, can be brought to lead the interference or carry the ball. If he reveals in such conference that he is unlikely to respond usefully, then his replacement becomes inevitable. But the chances are that he will prove sufficiently responsive to make it desirable that he be retained. Then he should be surrounded by a Cabinet, carefully selected, and this Cabinet should meet weekly with the minister for planning.

There should also be organized a group of parents of members, and at least twice annually the two groups should meet together. The First Baptist Church in Evanston has developed this supporting parent idea very efficiently. Would that all pastoral problems were as simple as this one.

HUGH E. BROWN

## CASE 10

The senior high school boys' class is in almost open revolt against the effeminate young man who has been appointed teacher. The superintendent of the school liked him and thought this would be a fine opportunity for him; in spite of the opposition of some of the boys, the teacher was installed. Although he is five years their senior, he is not particularly well informed, and the boys contend that he is narrow-minded and dogmatic. As a result the whole class is in a turmoil and the attendance has dropped sharply. The teacher feels that his prestige is at stake, and therefore is unwilling to resign. The superintendent now comes to you with the problem.

I understand this to be a class of senior high school boys in a church school. They are at a difficult age. The awakening of adolescence brings impulsions and moods which are new and strange. It is the period when youth is moved to dreams of independence, of adventure, and of achievement. Restlessness under authority and under old familiar surroundings sweeps over them. The urge to leave home, and the home town, is strong. If religion is to appeal to them it must be in terms of its expansive, dynamic outreach, including the risk of hardship, sacrifice, suffering and loneliness in the interest of a Cause. Religion may need to be presented somewhat in terms of the qualities the boys know in sports and physical endurance feats, yet related to some gleam of glory such as is found in winning victories for their team or their school or their town.

The superintendent should know these things from his observation and general experience with boys, even if he does not know them in terms of the books on psychology and education. In the case under consideration, he seems not to have taken these facts into account. An effeminate, poorly informed, dogmatic teacher for such a class is foredoomed to failure. The class craves a strong, virile, im-

aginative, yet sympathetic teacher who has the qualities of a real leader. In order to save the face of the teacher (and the superintendent) a change needs to be effected at the earliest tactful moment. It would be fortunate if the school needed at the moment a cornetist, or a secretary, or an assistant superintendent, which might afford a chance to "promote" the teacher and thus relieve the situation. Another suggestion is that the teacher might be given some vigorous stories, books, pictures, which might interest the class. Or they might have discussions of nonresistance, of humility, of patience, of self-sacrifice, of missionary adventures, or of some other recurrent topics. Another procedure could be to invite speakers to come and talk to the class, the invitation to be made and the plans arranged by the teacher. He might ask the boys to invite people of the town, lawyers, doctors, merchants, to come and tell some of their problems of trying to be Christians and carry on in their daily pursuits. Unless a new spirit can be developed by the end of the year or the season, the teacher must go.

EDWARD S. AMES

If the superintendent is hesitating for a moment over this decision, he constitutes the first difficult factor in the problem. The minister must first assume a teaching task toward him. He must be made to see that a church school exists for its boys and girls alone, and has no other responsibility which approaches that in importance. A teacher who is failing, is watching his class drop away and seethe in a turmoil, and still can feel that his prestige is at stake, marks a tragic mistake on the part of the superintendent, and this mistake must be used for its teaching value, for the sake of future decisions. A church school which has no way of divesting itself of a poor teacher except by wait-

ing for him to make up his mind to resign, needs to re-examine its whole structure and embark upon a new course, such as annual reappointments of the whole teaching staff without prejudice.

This crisis comes at the end of a tangle. It must be seen as an indication of the tangle, and the threads must be untangled far back of the crisis, if further difficulties are to be avoided over similar issues.

But what about the teacher and his class? The teacher must be removed and the class must be freed. Here the pastor can be of great help. He can personally devise and suggest some important piece of work on which he needs the young man's help, and must make sure that this work interferes with faithful attendance at the church school. The teacher must be, gently but firmly, promoted out.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

#### CASE 11

For a number of years it has been increasingly difficult to secure enough capable teachers for the work of the church school. Many men and women have been approached by the superintendent or the minister, but they have a wide variety of excuses: too busy, can't handle children, small children at home, lack of background, etc. Parents are free to criticize but do little to aid, and the morale of the school is low. What suggestions would you make for dealing with such a situation?

Ideally, the church should have a paid staff for its school of religion and paid teachers who are competent to teach in this all-important field. Absurd and dangerous is the popular notion that any well meaning person of good moral character is competent to teach religion. Almost equally absurd is the notion that, right though it is to pay the religious teacher of adults (the minister), it is wrong to pay the religious teacher of children. However, a paid

staff and paid teachers are at present beyond the reach of all but a very few churches. So what is to be done? It probably is a hopeful sign that growing numbers of church members feel they are unqualified to teach in the church school. Yet, in the absence of adequately trained teachers, persons as yet insufficiently trained must be found. They may or may not be parents. In any case, they should be helped to appreciate how wonderful is the opportunity that is offered them and they should be given a chance, in some teacher-training class, to prepare themselves for a holy task.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

When I read this question to my wife she remarked, "That comes home!" It certainly does to many ministers, congregations and superintendents of Sunday schools. We all must recognize that the most valid sacrament is that of personality. The Lord chose men, not always successfully, but he saw clearly that it is men who influence men. When either a minister or a superintendent fails to secure the cooperation of people in the Lord's work it is very probable that he is at fault. Someone else more dynamic, more consecrated, more inspiring may succeed where he has failed. If that is the situation the only thing that will maintain a man's self-respect and promote the Lord's work is for the minister to resign and let someone else take his place. The minister might first try having the superintendent resign and get someone to take *his* place.

It is just possible, however, that the school itself needs reorganization. It may have fallen into ruts, either in its ideology or in its pedagogical method. Someone trained in an up-to-date school of religion should be employed to come to the parish and show both minister and superintendent how to reorganize the school. That is being done in many places, and successfully.

It is widely recognized that the Sunday school is below the level of the day school and that the methods of religious instruction no longer command the respect of the pupils. The parents feel this without knowing just what is wrong and this explains in part their lack of cooperation. In the parish you mention there should be great searching of heart on the part of the minister, the superintendent and all who are responsible for the church.

JOHN H. MELISH

#### CASE 12

A young minister serving a small church found within a few weeks after his arrival that the control of the church was almost literally vested in the hands of one man. This person is superintendent of the Sunday school and his wife is president of the women's society. They are both energetic, kindly, self-sacrificing people, about whom the church has rotated for many years. They have raised the budget almost singlehanded, and he has served as the treasurer. They are proud of their service to the church, and the rest of the members have quietly permitted them to run the organization. The previous minister also found that this arrangement saved much of effort. The new pastor, however, is troubled because few others show a vital interest in the church. He is of the opinion that the present state is unwholesome, since new leadership is not developed and the church is not growing as it should. What advice would you give this young minister?

Fortunate is the minister who does not find some person dominating his church organization. Such a person may be well intentioned, but he can destroy the fellowship of a congregation.

I remember a friend of mine who went to the pastorate of a large church in an eastern city. He was met at the train by the superintendent of the Sunday school. He was entertained in the superintendent's home and given to understand that he could put over any program in the

church with the superintendent's help. On the second morning the minister left this home, saying to his host: "I intend to have a democratic church. You have invited me here apparently to control me. I do not intend to be in your home again until you change your attitude." The minister remained in that church for only a few years. Was it the fault of the superintendent or the minister? I sympathize with my friend's feeling but I question the wisdom of his method.

A minister may have to say abruptly: "You do too much in this church. You must stand aside and let other people do some of the work." In a long pastorate of twenty years in a church I have had to do that only once, and yet I have had many who were so overzealous as to become dictators of policy in some organization. Some of these people will cooperate with the minister if he solicits their help in training others for leadership. That has been my usual method of handling them. Or again, a minister may be able to give the church boss a new job, one which is difficult and will absorb all his time, or one which will keep him in the background or under the minister's immediate supervision. Many a pastor has successfully handled a situation by saying: "Mr. Jones, you do a lot for our church, but I am concerned with the lack of influence of our religious fellowship in this community. I wish you would turn over some of your church tasks to others and help me find out why our church does not grow. Will you give me your full assistance in this task?"

IVAN LEE HOLT

"This man and his wife love the church. They work for it. They give money and time to it. They attend it. They keep it going. There may be some pride and self-interest in their aggressive church work, but I believe they also love it. That is the key to the problem. That's your

starting point." The Reverend Percy X. Smith was giving advice to a young minister friend.

"I agree with you that it isn't good for two people to run a church. We don't need Diotrephes \* in our churches. You must show Mr. and Mrs. Manders that it isn't good. And your argument must appeal to their love for the church. They love it. All right. They are getting along in years. What's going to become of the church when they are gone? You must make them see that the welfare and the future of the church depend upon distributing the responsibilities and the honors, and thus developing leaders for the future.

"It will be necessary to proceed with subtlety, of course. You must be downright pawky about it. You must not slap the Manders' in the face. After all, they don't deserve that. They really deserve a great deal of appreciation. They have borne the heat and burden of the day, and probably because no one else would.

"You might preach some sermons on the future of the church and the future of your congregation. And some sermons on leaders and leadership, and on the well organized and well functioning church. Lay the groundwork for a conversation with the old man. I believe that one day you can talk to him frankly and get him interested in handing over his offices and responsibilities to others. I believe you can get him to be more enthusiastic about your idea than you are yourself. At the same time you can get your idea across to the other members.

"It can't be done in a day. It must not be done bluntly. It is a matter of educating Mr. and Mrs. Manders, and the other members. Allow yourself a two-year program and execute it subtly."

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

\* See III John 9-10. (Ed.)

## CASE 13

The superintendent of the church school has served in that capacity for thirty-odd years. He is now well over seventy and finds his chief satisfaction in the exercise of this office. However, the church school has registered little growth and no improvement in the past ten years. The incumbent insists on holding a "joint opening service" over which he presides. His formulas and his prayers are so stereotyped that even the children know them by heart; he is uncritical in his selection of teachers, and it is generally recognized that a new superintendent is needed. The only one who can bring about the change is the minister. Placed in such a situation, what would you do?

There are some cheerful facts about this case. The superintendent has evidently some fine qualities and he has a notable record of fidelity. If the children "know by heart" his prayers, he has done something for them.

Apparently this particular church school has no managing committee on religious education. Such a committee would seem easily capable of dealing with the problem. The minister's first job is to secure and train a committee of this type which will insist on sharing with the superintendent the task of finding competent teachers. If it is wise, it will also gradually elevate the superintendent to the position of honorary superintendent, with some minor special duties.

The committee will go into the matter of worship and possibly discover that some of the most modern schools are now featuring a joint service of mature pattern for the upper grades, in the church sanctuary.

In any case, this superintendent should be eased out of active management without the disabling sense that his long service is unappreciated and that he can no longer be of help. If, for a time, it is impossible to promote him,

then throw around him expert aid. Get him, if possible, to church school conventions, etc., where he may learn what others are doing. Suggest to him improvements in the worship. Provide him with prayer materials, mimeographed litanies for responsive use, hymnbooks which carry special worship programs, etc.

This is not an exceptional case and can be handled with a minimum of friction and a maximum of benefit.

HUGH E. BROWN

The minister should not alone assume responsibility for the removal of the superintendent, although he should see to it that the situation is speedily remedied. This he may do through an inspired and certainly proper action of the board of religious education — a board which every church ought, of course, to maintain.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

#### CASE 14

It has been difficult to secure a new president for the women's guild. The incumbent, who has continued unwillingly to hold the office, refuses to do so longer. A rather timid woman, who has a great loyalty to the church, has been persuaded, out of a feeling of duty, to take the post. She confesses to you that she is literally afraid to conduct a women's meeting, and can hope to get through the year only provided she has your support. What can you do to develop her leadership ability and at the same time avoid the accusation that you are running the guild through her?

If the timid woman will work and the more experienced one will not, use the former. Let the pastor be tactful, sincere and informed, and no serious objection will be offered to his counsel and support. The very modesty of the timid leader will often engender sympathetic coopera-

tion, and usually she will grow in courage and in the ease with which she administers her task. Though the work may not be as aggressive under her leadership as under one who is more confident, is it not better to try to develop the leader than to suffer the work to fall to pieces?

It looks as if a revival might be needed in such a church, a revival that will produce a desire for service and a spirit of cooperation. A study course in standardized guild work might also be very helpful. Let the timid leader be brought into touch with other church societies in order that she may hear from others their way of overcoming difficulties. Often a successful leader in another society can, by the simple story of her own blundering progress, impart a contagion that will change the most diffident into a resolute, determined person. The one inspired forthwith achieves the most encouraging results.

Given the right atmosphere in the church, acquaintance with tested and approved standards and methods, inspiring contacts with conquering personalities, and a genuine effort on the part of the timid woman to develop her own personality by the simple technique of Christian growth, the pastor should be willing to take the consequences of any possibility of being charged with "running" the guild.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

One of the difficult situations that every minister and director of religious education encounters is created by the mistaken estimate good people have of their own abilities to undertake Christian work. Frequently those who are least fitted to take places of responsibility in church work are most easily persuaded to accept such positions, while others who have native capacity and training are either timid or unwilling. In this case it may be that the woman's timidity is due to unfounded self-distrust. To

dissipate this she must be convinced of her abilities and visualize the urgent need for leadership in the cause to which she is evidently devoted. A presentation of new ways in which the guild can be of service might enlist her interest, or perhaps she could be persuaded to search out procedures which would inspire the organization to new achievements. There is a large amount of literature available bearing directly on the several lines of work — benevolent, educational, missionary, social or civic — in which a women's guild can render profitable service.

No doubt a person of the nature described would find such a position trying at first. But a certain degree of courage in making experiments with herself in the work of leadership, and with the circle she is attempting to direct, will issue in confidence and growing success.

As to the accusation that the minister is "running the guild" through her, most congregations are happy to have a minister with wit and ability enough to "run" any of the organizations in the church, whether by himself or through the leadership of others. It is a part and a fruitful part of a minister's task to educate the members to undertake new and needed forms of service, for which at first they feel themselves quite unfitted. No ministry of his is more rewarding than just this widening of the capacities of his people for fresh adventures of Christian service. His members will value the growth in their powers resulting from his urgent and tactful direction. Some of the most helpful church workers have been led on, by advancing responsibilities and wise counsel, to increasing confidence in themselves and greater efficiency in Christian work.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

## IV

### MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR THE CHURCH

PEOPLE wish to belong to a society, club or church which gives them a sense of significance and affords an opportunity for self-expression. If the organization has status in the local community, so much the better. (This is one reason why the newcomers to a city flock to the larger churches and neglect the smaller institutions in their own neighborhood.) By and large a church is to be reckoned with in a community when the deep yearnings of the people are answered through its worship services, its fellowship and its organized activities. One of the surest ways of enlisting community support and increasing the size and loyalty of the membership is to enrich the program and interpret the timeless importance of the Christian faith. Herein lies another of the minister's functions. In the performing of it many problems will arise, some of which are discussed in the following pages.

#### CASE 15

A minister is newly appointed to a church in a large city. He soon discovers that much of the membership of the church is a "paper membership," that the more active members come from a distance, and that people in the immediate vicinity of the building are scarcely aware of its presence. In fact, he has inquired of people living within two or three blocks and found that they could not direct him to any church of his denomination. What steps can he take to apprise the community of the church's presence and to make the church more effective in the life of the local community?

There is canonical support for paper membership in many denominations where the rule prevails that people should not be struck from the records until they are known to be dead or request a transfer to another church. What the minister should do is to make an every-member canvass by mail and by personal call to discover where people live and what is their attitude toward the church. This canvass will give him the facts, at least approximately. Then he can divide the results between a live list and a list of uncertain members. In making his reports of membership he should report the living and not the dead.

Many a church has learned how to adapt itself to a new community in which it finds itself. The minister of such a church might well inform himself as to how this was done in such books and surveys as Dr. Paul Douglass of the Federal Council of Churches will furnish him.

Many years ago Dr. William S. Rainsford took St. George's Church in Stuyvesant Square, New York, when it was in the condition described in this question and so adapted it to the neighborhood which scarcely knew of its existence that St. George's became like a city on a hill. From a church with a dozen old families he changed it into a live parish of five thousand and more people. It is one of the thrilling stories of the church in America and can be profitably read by ministers of all churches confronted with similar situations. The story is found recorded in a book by George Hodges entitled *St. George's Parish in the City of New York*. What was done at St. George's has been done elsewhere and is to be done in every city where conditions have changed. Generally speaking, the church should not move out of its community but should adapt itself to the needs of its community. Only a careful and scientific survey will show what these needs are.

JOHN H. MELISH

Knowing the need, the pastor calls his church board together. "Gentlemen, the odds are against us, the downtown church seems to have lost its influence. Nevertheless, there is a great work to be done, that is why I accepted the charge. If we do not unitedly and heartily meet this need, our usefulness as a church has come to an end. I see great possibilities, but not without much sacrifice and hard work. The ministry of this church is here to win the city for Christ, not to evade its responsibilities. We are part of a church that has stood every test for four hundred years. For this heritage we thank God; however glorious the past, we are most concerned about the present. Souls must be won, and this institution should become one of the outstanding powers for good in this city and state. Let it not be said that any man in this community shall ever again raise the cry, 'No man careth for my soul.' This church is not a club for a privileged few. Its doors shall be open to all men and children, rich and poor alike. We have no tricks to perform; God has given to us his Spirit and his Word, and as God's anointed let's get busy. As your pastor, I assure you that I am not afraid of any condition that may present itself, *if only you pledge me your undivided allegiance.* Of course I am asking also that every organization in the church work harmoniously for the good of the cause, and that self be eliminated and Christ alone exalted.

"It will take us three years to get our work under way. It will take six months of calling on your pastor's part, day and night, to determine what our membership is, and those whom we may depend upon. After that we shall start calling in the neighborhood adjoining the church.

"This is the simple plan for action for this congregation. One of our weaknesses has been financial. With your approval, a statement of every dollar received and expended shall be given to the people at the end of the year. The amount that every one has contributed shall be pub-

lished in an annual. Since the church has refused to accept God's way of giving the tithe, this is the best man-made method we know of to get results. If the congregation expects us to give an account of our stewardship as leaders, we want them to know where every dollar comes from and how it is spent.

"So that we may effectively carry out all visitations, it is recommended that the city be divided into ten sections, with a captain and coworker for each. The first visitation should be for good will, and also that a complete biographical record of every member may be obtained.

"Our Sunday school workers must understand that no child is to be discriminated against. The downtown situation will bring to us the poor. If a child appears ragged, his name is to be ascertained and that child is to be clothed properly before the next Sunday. Every teacher must recognize his or her responsibility to the entire need. An adequate youth program is to be carried out.

"An adult course of instruction will be inaugurated. This course will start in January and run until Easter, for two hours every Sunday evening. The fundamental questions of life and eternity will be presented in an appealing and interesting way. The entire community is to be canvassed and records kept of all weddings, funerals and social events where people may be contacted. All results are to be tabulated and the people will be notified concerning the outcome.

"There will be a ministry of music. It will be our objective to have three choirs: the senior choir, the intermediate choir, and the *a capella* choir for advanced voices.

"Once a year a personal visit is to be made by the pastor or the associate pastor in every home." \*

\* It was a situation very similar to that described in the question which confronted Dr. Weertz when he went to St. John's Lutheran Church in 1926. (Ed.)

Results in twelve years: An old indebtedness of fifty-eight thousand dollars was eliminated. The old building which had stood for forty years proved inadequate, and a new structure was built during the tenth year; within two years two-thirds of the new debt was paid off. During this time the board found it necessary to add two associate pastors to the staff. The confirmed membership has grown from five hundred fifty to three thousand. The Sunday school, a difficult problem also, increased from an average attendance of one hundred to six hundred per Sunday. Yet we find that there are thousands still unreached in this city.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

#### CASE 16

A minister was glad when he was appointed to a church with an endowment which would guarantee practically the entire church budget. After a few months' experience, however, he was disturbed to find that most of his people were lulled into quiescence by this same feeling of security. They attended the church services and made very modest contributions, but felt little sense of responsibility for any aspect of the work. How can he, through his ministry, heighten their spiritual and social awareness and drive away the torpor which holds them?

Have our Christian imaginations so atrophied that needs are interesting to us only when they are at the ends of our noses? Any church sufficiently endowed to support its own program without personal contributions should be "stabbed broad awake" again and again by the heart-breaking needs in the world around it. The missionary program of its denomination should be given a place in the budget large enough to restore the church to awareness. Some special project of nonsectarian service could be selected with the help of the "World Christianity" committee, and adopted as an enterprise for the congregation. "Fellow-

ship trips" to slums and tenements, to mills and mines, should be organized for the young people. The community fund, and all such agencies, should not only receive generous contributions from the church, but should be helped by those personal services, of solicitation and organization, which the church does not need for itself.

Meanwhile isn't there some way to obtain the right to dissipate the endowment as promptly as possible, or else to build up a church program so ambitious, so demanding, as to make the endowment only a drop in the bucket of generous Christian responsibility?

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

It is an interesting and a depressing fact that endowed churches are liable to the stagnation indicated. This is probably due to the fact that under ordinary conditions a church manifests the highest and keenest interest when planning a building, raising money for debts, or "campaigning" for some definite, visible ends. Churches put so much energy into getting equipment for their religious work that they seldom have any left for the work itself. An endowment generally adds to this predicament.

The escape from such a situation is to develop interests which may become vital and appealing in terms of their primary religious significance. Thus a church with current expenses cared for is in position to eliminate requests for its own maintenance and to guarantee that new funds will be devoted to missionary, benevolent, educational, and other philanthropic enterprises. It should also be in better condition to invite people to share its benefits "without money and without price." However, people have pride in paying for what they get, as nearly as may be. They want to give something and, because it is so common to give money, few persons realize how much else there is

to give. Thought, time, cooperative tasks and recreations, special skills, ideas, conversation should be contributed. And if it is not clear how such things can be utilized, then that fact offers a very real opportunity for inventiveness and experimentation. Every church is a potential community center, and could stand in vital relationship to civic, social and artistic life.

But all the work of the church, to reach its fullest vitality, needs a body of ideas, a religious philosophy of life, an ideology. An endowed church would offer an ideal chance for a preacher with ideas to interpret religion to his age, and to have entire freedom in doing so. Many ministers are handicapped in preaching because they must temper their message to rich contributors, or to conservative officials, or to "worldly" members. An endowed church, like any other church, can "drive away torpor" most effectively only by actively recruiting members, by concerning itself with the nurture of childhood and the inspiration of youth, and by the promotion of social idealism. But it remains doubtful whether the greatest success in cultivating the religious life can be achieved where the normal, practical financial pressures are absent.

EDWARD S. AMES

#### CASE 17

Practically the entire budget of the local church is raised among the 25 per cent of the people who are over fifty years of age. Younger men and women participate wholeheartedly in the program of the church; they are members and attend the worship services, but they do not give in proportion to their ability. The minister, who recognizes that the future of his church depends on training those who are younger to contribute, comes to you asking advice. What suggestions would you make to stimulate the feeling of responsibility on the part of these people?

Churches are likely to have a more loose and inefficient financial program than most other organizations. Why this should be so is difficult to understand. The New Testament certainly lays sufficient emphasis upon the duty and satisfaction of stewardship to stimulate adequate instruction on that essential feature of church life. Too often the church finances are committed to an individual or group who accepts the responsibility unwillingly, and attends to the matter in a haphazard and indifferent manner. Or the minister is compelled to assume the obligation of raising the funds for the church; this is a totally wrong and self-defeating policy.

No single pattern can be laid down as the best for all cases, but certain suggestions may be ventured. The duty of contributing to the support of the church in all its departments is equally the opportunity and responsibility of all the members without exception. To make this clear to the congregation is the joint obligation of the minister in his pulpit messages and of the finance committee in regular communications to the people. These latter have the same right to understand the financial policy and conduct of the church that members and stockholders in any other organization possess. The good name of the church in its business relations is the concern of all. If there are members who are wholly unable to contribute, they ought to be assured that such inability in no way limits their privileges in the church and is no reason for nonattendance or neglect of such activities as they are able to assume. Some churches have adopted the admirable plan of asking the members to designate their share in the financial work of the organization without solicitation by any committee or official. This practice soon becomes a matter of good form and a recognized token of loyalty and devotion. The every-member visit of officers of the church, where the primary

motive is not financial but social and informative, is always productive of a unifying sentiment among the members, and a desire to share in financial as well as other responsibilities. Some congregations emphasize the tithe as a Christian duty, and this has its value, even in cases where it is not featured as a requirement of the Christian society. The instruction of the church in the duties of benevolence is indispensable in a well ordered congregation.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

This situation is not unique. Most churches have to deal with it, soon or late. Indeed, even few of the *older* members ever give "in proportion to their ability." Several practical methods may be used. One is that of the First Methodist Church, Evanston, where the parish is divided into numerous age groups for purposes of the financial canvass. Each group is assigned a quota. In this way the younger group may be given a quota more adequate to its ability. Its quota should be worked out in conference with the younger people. This method permits some wholesome education and the development of stewardship. Another method is to have the canvassing committee constituted largely of the younger men who, because their acquaintance is chiefly among younger people, will canvass more diligently in that group. In precanvass training, this matter of stepping up their giving can naturally be stressed. A definite blackboard analysis of the sources of the church's income, according to age groups, will open the eyes of some to their relatively small contributions.

This problem is a real puzzler and there are no patent solutions.

HUGH E. BROWN

## CASE 18

In a medium-sized city there are three churches of a given denomination. Two of them are strong, effective organizations with large memberships. The third is small and, as one of the young people remarked, "second-rate." It is obvious to the minister that many of the members, particularly the young people, feel their church to be inferior and are consequently rather apologetic for it. However, it will undoubtedly be maintained since it serves a community (lower middle class) unreached by the other churches. What can be done by the minister to build up the morale of his people and to raise the status of his church in the eyes of the community?

In every city there are churches that have social prestige. One church seems to offer an opportunity for social advancement and young people like to be married in its chapel. When they become socially ambitious they transfer their membership to it. Then there are churches whose more ritualistic services appeal to young people who have become accustomed to the ritualistic services of a college chapel. They feel the lack of a worshipful atmosphere in the old home church. Other churches draw people from all over the city because of the fame of the minister or the quality of the music. They may be attended by many young people who in turn draw others until the impression grows that they are young people's churches.

What is a preacher to do who wants to hold the young people of his church families, in the face of such appeals? Let me say frankly that he must be reconciled to losing some, and it may be that his own group will be more homogeneous when they have gone. Those who want to go elsewhere and are held against their will are inevitably disturbing individuals who are critical of everything attempted. However, there are things any preacher can do to build up a young people's group:

(1) He must speak their language. He does not have to adopt their slang, but he has to learn that a religious vocabulary long in use may be unintelligible both to the college graduate and to the city youth who has not gone to college. The minister must learn to speak of problems and ideals in a language that has in it a ring of reality. He can best learn that language through active association with the youth he seeks to help.

(2) He must have some recreational program. Though the equipment may be poor, an attractive program can be devised. Sometimes a man makes the mistake of attempting too elaborate a program or of aping a program, attractive elsewhere, which is not locally suitable. He cannot well compete with the moving picture theater or the night club or any other agency whose sole purpose is entertainment, but there are always social longings to be satisfied. Many churches give the whole of Sunday evening to a fellowship tea and a short devotional service for young people, and have amazing success in attracting a fine group. Others organize dramatic clubs to present pageants and plays in order to satisfy a desire for drama and self-expression. Others have special classes and clubs on week nights. Some combine all these efforts.

(3) The minister may find a distinctive place in the whole religious program of the city or of the church federation for his type of church. I know more than one minister in an inconspicuous church who has made his institution an influence in the city's religious life, and has found support because people believe he is doing the kind of work a church ought to do. It may be a social service ministry in his neighborhood, a ministry to neglected groups who will not attend the regular services of worship, or a ministry to some underprivileged boys throughout the city. It may be necessary sometimes for the minister of a less favored church to attract city-wide attention to himself in order

that there may be developed among his own young people a proper respect for his leadership.

IVAN LEE HOLT

Churches are not second-rate because they are small, nor are they effective because they are large. Any minister in a small church should realize the tremendous chance for an effectiveness which no large church can ever muster, and should refuse to accept, for himself, the apologetic tone which might easily affect his young people. This church has a community around it, unreached by other churches. What an opportunity, shared by neither of the big churches, with large memberships which sprawl all over the town, and offer no chance for neighborliness or community upbuilding! This church has a constituency described as "lower middle class." Its people then are not infected with the proud arrogance or the silly fears of the overrich, not haunted by the terrible dreads of the pitifully poor. Does anyone dare call it inferior, by these standards?

If it is not well organized, let that be the minister's first task. If its young people are restless and apologetic, let him so enthuse them about the projects which beckon to them that they will become a model to the other churches. As for the status of the church in the eyes of the community, I bid the minister be comparatively careless about that. Only be bold and very courageous, rejoicing in the peculiar freedom for forthright Christian experiments which is possible in a small, lower middle class community.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

#### CASE 19

The sanctuary has been in need of repairs for a number of years. Walls are water-stained, plaster is loosened in spots, the floors are badly worn, and the arrangement of furnishings

is not conducive to worship. The older members have become accustomed to the increasing shabbiness of the worship room, and assume that newcomers will not object to it. Although the people are of moderate means, extra money can be raised only with difficulty and the church board is loath to assume new obligations. The minister and some of the members, on the other hand, realize that a renovated auditorium with rearranged furniture would add greatly to the helpfulness of the church services. How can they arouse the interest of the church to undertake this improvement and its accompanying costs?

It has pleased God to use preaching for the accomplishment of soul saving and many other gracious ends. Why not some well prepared sermons on the great passages of Old Testament Scripture concerning the Lord's house, particularly those in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, and those in Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as those in respect to the building of the first temple in Jerusalem?

A tactful presentation can be made of the benefits that have accrued to churches with good buildings, together with concrete facts as to how such churches have secured better equipment. The congregation need not be immersed all at once in a flood of data. It is better to sprinkle the people continuously with incidents and facts casually introduced in connection with other important matters in sermon and teaching. If possible, conduct the less discerning and more contented on occasion into an actual situation which has been improved by giving attention to building. Of course, if it is possible to crowd the old building with converts and previously inactive members, a demand will soon arise for new or enlarged quarters.

Sometimes a pastor can secure from a single interested individual a bequest or a donation that will prime the pump for adequate giving. Once the congregation is aroused it ordinarily will contrive to get the money in due

time to pay for the needed equipment. That awakening usually comes through convinced individuals within the church who gradually impart their convictions to others, until there is a safe majority with which to launch the new movement. Concentrate on producing the convinced individuals. When the resources within the congregation, both those of pastor and of interested members, have failed, perhaps the services of a church building expert might help to secure the needed improvement.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

Several things might hopefully be done:

(1) Raise the question, Why do we consent to worship under physical conditions in which we would consider it a disgrace to live?

(2) Offer a course in ecclesiastical architecture and religious symbolism.

(3) Organize tours of inspection of good examples of church architecture: the automobile should make this easily possible.

(4) Make a beginning, however small, in the right direction. In one case, well known to me, a single window filled with beautiful stained glass caused all the remaining windows, filled with wretchedly painted glass, to appear impossible.

(5) Appeal to skilled craftsmen, *who are members of the church*, to donate all or part of their labor as their proper contribution to a suitable building for the celebration of religion.

(6) If necessary, the fact may be pointed out that an ugly, decrepit church edifice can hardly hope to attract young people who care for beauty, or indeed anyone else.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

## V

### PROBLEMS ARISING WITHIN CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

WITHIN a church as within other human institutions, an endless variety of tensions and discords can develop. Whenever people are closely associated there will occasionally be conflicting purposes, rivalry for leadership, unwillingness to assume responsibility, and efforts to utilize the organization for personal advantage. The minister cannot be indifferent to the problems occasioned by such attitudes.

Sometimes, unfortunately, the minister envisages himself as a White Knight hastening from one sphere of conflict to another, dissolving tension and vindicating the right, when actually he is making himself into an officious busybody. It would be well for him to learn what many parents have discovered: that children's quarrels are frequently best settled by the children themselves and that outside interference may aggravate rather than solve the difficulty.

There are cleavages within organizations, however (as illustrated by Case 20), which cannot be ignored. In situations where the minister feels under the necessity of actively intervening, he must not domineer but should provide a time, opportunity and stimulus for the amicable and Christian solution of the conflict. Unless a moral principle is clearly at stake he dare not permit himself to become a

partisan of either side. His contribution may well consist of a good-humored constructive emphasis on the church as a brotherhood of people who not only tolerate but love each other, in spite of transitory differences.

### CASE 20

The women's guild is regularly divided into two factions on practically any issue which may arise. These factions are self-centered; each has its own leadership and its own ambitions. How would you proceed to minimize or eliminate this conflict, winning the primary allegiance of both factions to the church?

The minister's first task in this case is to discover quietly all the relevant facts. How did this factionalism originate? Who are the actual promoters of the factions? What are they like and what do they really want?

Perhaps this women's guild has some curable defects of organization. It may be victimized by objectives that are too puny. The cleavage may be traced to some deeper factor than overambitious leadership. If so, a thorough restudy of the organization should be made, and comparisons with prosperous guilds in other churches should be presented. Many alert women are gravely discontented with the average women's guild.

Is there a sizable minority unattached to either faction? Could this minority become a solving factor? Does this guild have a working cabinet and does the minister counsel with the cabinet? Has the minister ever had the rival leaders together in his study? These and other questions come up begging for answer.

The minister will do well not to take sides with either faction. And not to be in a poisonous hurry to have the thing settled. Old Father Time settles some of these things. But the minister can and should bring upon the guild a

steady barrage of challenge to larger and larger objectives. And he can do what some ministers are doing: arrange corporate communion services for the guild; help plan a richer devotional life; organize and lead Bible study or mission study classes within the guild. When the tide of a deeper spiritual life rolls into these little bays called guilds, it covers up many of the rocky problems which threaten disaster.

HUGH E. BROWN

The Reverend Percy X. Smith was again in a stew. His church kept him in one stew after another, but by long experience he had learned that one may successfully finesse his way out of most stews.

Across the study desk from him sat two ladies, members of his congregation. Both were good members. One was Mrs. Morrison, aged forty. The other was Mrs. Morris, aged thirty.

"The women's guild has gotten into a bad way," said Mr. Smith. "It's divided. Two factions. All of us know it though none of us speaks openly about it. I have been hoping that the thing would heal, but it gets worse. It's a bad situation and is injuring our church."

"I have decided upon a drastic measure. Something must be done and we are going to do it. There are two factions. All right, we will divide the guild into two groups. Perhaps this isn't an ideal solution but I believe it will work."

"This is a Presbyterian church so I have gone about this using Presbyterian methods. Last week at the monthly meeting of the session we passed a motion instructing the guild to divide. One group will hold its meetings on Tuesdays and the other on Thursdays. Once a quarter there will be a joint meeting. We appointed you two

ladies to be the leaders of the two groups for six months, after which you may elect your own officers. We appointed you because we know you have not been active in the divisive work that has been going on, and because we believe the welfare of the church is more important to you than the factional interests of the guild. We want each of you to select an organizing committee of moderates and at a joint meeting of the committees to divide the membership along factional lines.

"I will explain as much of the plan as is necessary from the pulpit. And I will preach some sermons along the line of loyalty and unity and unselfishness in the church's work. But the success of the plan depends principally upon the leadership you two ladies give.

"This plan is the order and the wish of the session."

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

#### CASE 21

The young people of the church who rose to positions of leadership from five to eight years ago continue to dominate the young people's society. Others, who are five years their juniors, are therefore unable to acquire any leadership status and as a result, feeling that there is small place for them in the church, are drifting away. How could you proceed to handle this problem?

The problem outlined is found in every church and every organization of the church. People of different ages do not get on well together. The first thing to do, assuming that the organization itself is a live one and serves a real need, is to divide it into younger and older groups. This can be done if the older people are handled tactfully and the younger people are vitally interested. If it is not done the older people grow fewer and fewer and finally

the organization ceases to exist. Meanwhile the younger people are not reached at all. It is possible to bring a younger group into their own organization or to establish for them a branch of the organization. A few years later the work must be done all over again for these so-called young people have by that time become older people and another generation is waiting to be interested in the church.

Where the membership of the church is small there is danger of not having enough members, either young or old, to form a live organization. No parish can have enough people to interest all its members in all the things in which church people should be interested today. Instead, therefore, of trying to organize parochial organizations for all groups along all lines in a community where there are several churches, a plan of cooperation based on group ages should be substituted for a competitive and individual parochial program. Where there are several churches each one may assume responsibility for a certain age group; the other churches should gladly send their people of that age to this group. With the real Christian cooperative spirit the whole community and all the churches will profit by this new and modern plan.

JOHN H. MELISH

One effective solution of this problem is the organization of units or divisions constituted of persons, of approximately the same age, who have similar interests and experiences. In some churches, the present number of such organized groups is too small, the result being that persons who have long outgrown the young people's society nevertheless insist upon remaining in it inasmuch as there is no other group with which they may happily identify themselves and in which they may achieve a sense of significance. In one church — there are doubtless others — a large adult

membership has been organized into divisions having alphabetical designations. "A" division is constituted of persons fifty years of age and upwards; "B" division, of middle-aged persons; "C" division, of young married people from twenty-two to thirty-five years of age; "D" division, of persons who are beyond college age and still unmarried; "E" division, of young people of college age who may or may not be actually in college. (All persons younger than these are included in the organizations of the church school.) The several divisions provide their own social life, maintain forums for the discussion of religion and social ethics, and raise their share of the church budget. Thus no one feels disposed to remain in an age group to which he does not belong in order to enjoy a needed social life or to find an outlet for his energies.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

#### CASE 22

There is currently sharp debate in the choir as to its function in the church. The chairman of the finance committee has sought to persuade the choir that it, as an organization of the church, should accept a quota in the financial campaign which is to clear off the debt on the parsonage. A number of the choir members agree; others are obviously irritated, since they feel this is not a choir function and since they are already expected to contribute through the church school or the young people's society. What would you do in this situation?

Here we are dealing with the "war department" of church activities. No matter what the difficulty is, the pastor is always called in to clear it up. The chairman of the finance committee has no doubt made a mistake in antagonizing certain members of the choir. They are irritated, and that always causes unrest.

Anyone who is ancient enough to know of a fine art that

has almost disappeared from American life, knows that it would be applicable to the case in hand. I refer to the fine art practiced by our parents at certain seasons of the year: plucking the feathers of the geese. The object was to get all the feathers possible without making the goose squawk. What an art that was! Nowhere is the fine art of Christian diplomacy needed more sorely than in dealing with singers who very often have an exaggerated idea of their greatness. The ministers themselves are frequently afflicted with the same shortcoming. They both often feel underpaid, and most of the time this is true. No great work can ever be done in music or the ministry if we consider finances alone.

The underlying motive must be love, and "art for art's sake." Let us under no circumstances permit the choir, or any other organization, to become a football to be kicked around. Let us not sidetrack any worthy group for trivialities. Their business is to sing, and sing well. I am 100 per cent for the choir, if it reasonably performs its duty.

We are acquainted with choirs who through consecration and noble idealism have not only performed their duties well every Lord's day, but in a spirit of cooperation have put on sacred concerts, operettas and even semi-operas that have cleared many hundreds of dollars for the church treasury. First and last, however, the choir is not an organization to raise money. It should be used for one purpose alone, and that is to praise God through one of the finest arts that have ever been given to man, human song as it expresses the feeling of the heart in adoration to God.

There is no group that when fully consecrated can be of greater help to the minister than the choir. Let us not divert the energies of our faithful helpers.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

The difficulty about persuading the choir to assist in raising funds for the church grows out of the weakness of the usual financial methods of churches. The church members in the choir should of course do their part so far as money is concerned, but to allot a certain amount to be raised by the choir, or any other organization within the church, leads to trouble. As this case is stated, it shows that individuals, under the system followed, are likely to be called upon as members of different groups to help in several sets. This multiplicity of calls through various agencies penalizes the most active members for their zeal!

The whole financial procedure of the church could be organized in a way which would more fairly distribute the task and achieve better results in every way. A plan used in my own church for many years is as follows: There is a budget for the year, providing in one fund for current expenses and in another for benevolences, including missions. Subscription cards provide a column of amounts for weekly payments ranging from five cents to ten dollars or more. On one side of this column the subscriber checks the amount he is willing to give for current expenses, and on the other side of the column the amount for benevolences. He is assured that he will not be asked for any other subscription for any purpose during the year unless a real emergency arises. No other money-raising plan is employed or even allowed. There are no dinners, entertainments or lectures for profit, and no public collection. Dinners are served regularly but the meals are provided at cost and the service in the kitchen is by people hired for the purpose. The dinners are for fellowship and convenience. They have been served on Friday evenings and Sundays at one o'clock for fifteen years, except in the summer months, and there has been no financial gain or loss.

on them, but there has been great gain in the life of the church.

All members of the church, regardless of any special organizations to which they belong, are expected to be represented in the regular subscriptions to the one treasury of the church. In turn, all expenses of all organizations are paid from this one budget — including the church school, the women's club, the young people's society, the men's club, the Scouts, the Camp Fire girls, and whatever other agencies there may be. In this way no such problems as the one under discussion ever arise.

EDWARD S. AMES

#### CASE 23

In the choir there is a loyal member, who rarely misses a practice period or a Sunday service, who sings lustily, and who is unaware that he often sings slightly off key. Other members of the choir are irritated and embarrassed by his interference with the harmony of the anthem, and a few church members have commented on the unfortunate situation. Much disturbed, but at a loss as to what she should do, the director of the choir comes to you asking advice. What will your counsel be?

Presumably the singer in question is one of a choir composed of volunteer members. The fact that he is rendering volunteer service makes the problem more difficult of solution. If he were being paid, he could be dismissed with better grace. Incidentally it may be remarked that choirs in Bible times were paid from the same treasury from which other religious workers received their remuneration. I do not know when volunteer choirs originated, but apparently there is no scriptural sanction for such. The churches drifted into this custom as the result

of a need, just as they have slipped into other practices for which there is no scriptural reference. The most frequent excuses for the volunteer choir are that the church is financially unable to pay the musicians, and that there is no more reason or Scripture for paying them than there would be for paying the officers and teachers in the Sunday school and young people's work; and this is true. The plan in the Old and New Testaments was to pay all religious workers without discrimination, and this carried with it the right of selection. The exercise of that right in the case before us would solve the vexing problem.

The case might be handled, however, by diverting the offending singer to some other work for which he is better adapted. Again, it might be possible to approach him so tactfully as to disclose the difficulty and secure his agreeable consent to withdrawal. Still again, if he is too sensitive to warrant anyone's conference with him about the situation, a spirit of forbearance could be shown by other members and the course of instruction on the part of the choir director could be so shaped as to obtain some improvement. As long as the choir remains voluntary the last suggestion in a stubborn case seems about the only one left to follow.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

The efficiency of the worship of many a church or school suffers from the continued service of a devoted person who is unconscious of or indifferent toward some personal defect, and who goes on causing disquiet and giving offense to people in the congregation. The adjustment of such cases requires delicate treatment and a large measure of tact. The minister and officers must decide between the measure of injury to the services likely to result from a continuance of the faulty performance as compared with

the effect of a kindly but firm suggestion that a change is necessary. Present always is the possibility that offense may be taken and trouble generated by any attempt at remedial action. Yet such risk ought not be evaded if the fault is palpable and serious. It is better that one person should be offended than that an entire congregation or department should suffer. On the other hand, if the individual in question is really devoted to the welfare of the organization, and possessed of a Christian spirit, he will not be offended, and indeed ought to be grateful.

To be sure, any type of service rendered in a church or school is subject to some criticism. Is there a minister, an organist, a singer, a teacher, an usher or any other functionary against whose services some adverse comment may not be uttered by some member? Great care is needed in judging of the actions of those whose purpose it is to render faithful and acceptable service. Nevertheless, when that service is impaired by unavoidable faults of performance, there should be no hesitation in bringing the matter to attention and correction. The dignity, worshipfulness and efficiency of the church's ministry ought not be jeopardized by failure to apply a suitable and considerate corrective.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

#### CASE 24

A sizable minority of the church's governing board objects to the fact that the church budget allots practically as much money for the church music as for foreign missions. The leading members, however, fear that certain large pledges will not be renewed if the music falls below the high standard which has characterized the church. A new budget is being prepared for the next year, and the old debate is being aired. What should the minister's policy be? Should he seek to throw his influence on either side of the controversy?

Strange, is it not, that when the music budget seems large and the missions budget seems small, the only expedient which occurs to us is to cut the music budget, and that we are afraid to do that because it might lose us some pledges from music lovers. Surely there is a better way. Why not increase the missions budget until it is decently high? Then the enthusiasts for missions will have ample scope for their efforts in obtaining the extra money necessary to balance the new and increased budget.

But I am skeptical about the value of these easy comparisons. I am not at all sure that in every case the budget for foreign missions should be greater than the budget for music. It depends partly upon the kind of foreign mission work which is being done. Is it meanly denominational, pridefully statistical, exclusively evangelistic, sentimentally promoted? It depends partly upon the kind of music that is being proposed. Is it the professional skill of an artistic quartet, without any pretense of Christian consecration, or is it a music faculty of devoted instructors who will help young people and old to regain the joy of Christian song?

Until the minister has thought such things out pretty carefully, he should postpone any policy in the old debate. And his influence can be thrown, this way or that, not by deciding things for his people and imposing his decision upon their will, but by the slow and patient process of the teaching of underlying principles out of which responsible decisions grow.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

The church which I have served longest has a large item for music in its budget. I have always regarded this as a wise expenditure. The depression came and even the strongest churches reduced their appropriations for music.

Many of them turned to choirs of volunteers, and paid only an organist and director. When our budget had to be reduced, it was proposed to eliminate the appropriation for music or to cut it so drastically that the character of the musical service would be completely changed.

Of course I did not want the benevolences to suffer, because the church's missionary and educational efforts should be increased in such a time of disturbance. What could I do? Some reductions were inevitable. I could have allowed myself to be put in the position of choosing between the music and the gifts for missions. A visiting minister in my pulpit might refer in his sermon to churches which spend much for music and little for missions; indeed, one did that at the time when I faced my problem. He was a secretary of the denominational board of missions.

I gave up neither music nor missions. I decided on the maximum budget I thought my church could raise, which was less than the one we had had. I started in by reducing my own salary and then all other salaries including those of the choir. We discovered certain items of local expense which could be eliminated entirely. A few organizations in the church agreed to raise special contributions for some of the benevolences. The result was that we lost neither the inspiration of the music nor the gifts to the community and world program of the church.

I would follow such a course every time. If a minister is compelled to decide between missions and music he must give up the expenditure for music; there could be no hesitancy. Many a church has good music and pays little for it. But every church must have music that aids in worship. People will be moved to do their duty if they find at the church an inspirational service, and good music is too much of an aid to worship to be neglected. The expenditure of a large sum of money may not secure the kind of music a

church should have. In our nonritualistic Protestant churches we have come to the time when we must give very careful and thoughtful consideration to our music. The minister should exert every effort to avoid a conflict between the items in his budget for music and missions. Or else he may not have enough people at his church to promote any missionary task.

IVAN LEE HOLT

## VI

### PROBLEMS ARISING BETWEEN CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

WHILE conflicts between church organizations present patterns somewhat similar to those arising within individual societies or clubs, they are usually of a more serious nature and tend to continue over a longer period. The importance to the church of the minister's ability to deal with such issues tactfully, without undue assumption of power and prerogatives and with proper consideration for the rights and traditions of constituent societies and their members, can scarcely be overrated. His skill in these regards will serve as an index of his efficiency in the administrative aspects of his task.

Lack of harmony between the church societies or the domination of one over the rest is generally caused by a mistaken loyalty. Instead of giving prime allegiance to the church itself, the members of a subordinate group have developed partisan or sectarian enthusiasms which may sap the strength from the rest of the structure. The wise and capable pastor will not permit such a situation to develop, though he may be unfortunate enough to inherit this sort of problem from a lax predecessor. Where there is a strong active program the leader must serve as a balance-wheel to impart steadiness to the craft and to insure an even performance. A minister is essentially an interpreter. He not only seeks to interpret God to man, but also man to

man and class to class. It is his task to break down the barriers between racial and cultural groups, between urban and rural populations, and also between the women's foreign and home missionary societies.

Overorganization may be as unfortunate as underorganization. In the former case there are too many wheels in the machinery. Loyal church members are besieged by competing groups for their adherence and support. The struggle to keep the various clubs functioning takes a major portion of the church's energy, so that in spite of much work little progress is shown. Each society develops vested interests which must stand inviolate, or the peace of the brethren is jeopardized. An organization whose function is not integrated into the program of the church will either shrivel up and blow away or become a trouble maker.

An important factor in the solution of tension between church organizations is time, which heals many a wound. A far-seeing pastor will not ignore the problem, but will work slowly and patiently, building up the loyalty of the people, winning their confidence, exalting the church itself and stressing its prior claims. He will not frustrate his own aims by trying to use an authority which he does not possess. One of the values of an extended pastorate lies at this point. The longer his period of service, the better a man knows his people and understands their interests and traditions, and the more willing they are to listen to his counsel.

## CASE 25

Under the vigorous leadership of a prominent businessman, the men's Bible class has grown until it has a membership equal to half that of the church. The class has an active program and has, in most respects, become independent of both the church school and the church. It selects its own benevolence projects and manages its own budget, without reference to the church. The majority of its members go home or to the golf course instead of remaining for the morning worship service. In short, it is almost a competing organization, utilizing the church as its meeting place, using the church rolls as its prospect list, indirectly and unintentionally undermining the church's worship and financial program, and, at the same time, making scant contribution to the general budget. Assume that you are a pastor who has recently come to this church. How would you deal with this difficult situation?

I have had no experience with overgrown men's Bible classes. From what I hear, they are sometimes as hard to manage as Kate Smith in a revolving door. Some of them are nourished on promotional fodder that a patent medicine show would hesitate to eat.

If I were the pastor, "recently come to this church," I would study this case with all the energy and patience of a good diagnostician. I would examine the history of this class with the best microscope I could find. How has this church dealt with this vigorous leader? Has he ever been a trustee, a deacon or a member of any official board? Has his counsel ever been sought on major concerns of the church? Has he been allowed to develop the idea that he is neither needed nor favored in the general management of the church? Has some former minister blundered in the matter?

I would lose no time in asking this leader to my home and inviting him to explore with me the areas of fuller

cooperation with the total church program. I would assume in the conversation that he and the class were anxious to cooperate. I would ignore the past record of divided loyalty.

If he seemed to be a sensible Christian man, I would seek to have him elected to a place of primary responsibility in the management of the church. If he turned out to be intractable, pettily ambitious and generally hopeless, I would invite a small group of the more thoughtful of the class, and state to them the whole problem. If I could not make progress on that road, I would put the problem up to the church council, and seek patiently the Christian solution.

HUGH E. BROWN

My first move, upon assuming the pastorate, would be to contact this prominent businessman individually. In my office at the church! Not at his home, or his place of business, or at a dinner engagement, but in my office at the church. The King's business is the greatest business on earth, and should be conducted in a businesslike way. Any one could see that the former pastor must have been a weakling, else he would not have permitted this man's rare genius — as demonstrated by such an outstanding piece of work — to have been misdirected as it was.

I would upon knees of prayer ask God to give me that man's heart and confidence. I would do everything on earth through love and kindness to use this man's talents constructively. We need businessmen, professional men, and foremost leaders in all walks of life. Great churches are not made by weaklings, but through strong business and intellectual leaders. If he loves the cause, which I pray he does, I would make the winning of this man the major objective of my ministry. I would point out every one of

his good traits, I would appeal to his loyalties, and even to his ego. (Every man has his ego, let us use it for the glory of God.)

Then when I had done this, I would slay him "with a knock-out blow," and show him how his leadership was proving to be a devastating and disastrous influence to the cause of Christ. I would also show him that he was leading men away from God and the beauty of holiness, that he was drawing men away from God's house and the appointed services. I would prove to him that a steward must be faithful in *all things!* I would absolutely have no mercy on him when it came to showing him his failings. After this I would woo him back through love. There would be no evading of issues. The pastor through love would once and for all point out the fact that there can be but one head of the institution, and that is the man whom the congregation called to be its rightful head.

We would now be ready for the next step, the calling together of every organizational leader in the church, including this prominent businessman. I would at that time lay down the policy to be followed by all. There is no greater program on earth than that which challenges us through the church. We can render no greater allegiance than being faithful to its teachings and its supreme head, Jesus Christ our Lord. Christ and the church would be stressed above everything else! Every organization in the church would be commended for its aggressiveness, but no one individual or organization dare to be a law unto itself, however worthy the objective. It would be shown to every group that a house divided against itself must ultimately fall. "The strength of the wolf is in the pack."

From now on, no major objective shall be inaugurated until it has received the official sanction of the church board. The major sin in church work today is that we are

permitting organizations to become ends in themselves, instead of means to an end. Any society in the church, worthy as it may be in itself, that does not harmoniously dovetail into the larger work of evangelism, cannot of itself be a blessing to the church. I am certain that with this purpose of heart dominating the minister and his people, vitality would come to this church.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

### CASE 26

The men's brotherhood is a somewhat feeble organization, which holds from three to six meetings each year. These are occasionally well attended, but usually, in spite of all the efforts of officers and the church secretary, only a small proportion of the men of the church are present. However, the brotherhood has been much irritated by the new church night series which is being planned by a committee representing all the organizations of the church, and its president has remarked on several occasions: "If this program goes through, it will mean the end of the brotherhood." Many other men are also annoyed at what they regard as unfair competition. What suggestions would you make to minimize this tension?

A church like any other institution is subject to the law of change, and may discover that one of its societies, formerly useful, is no longer needed. This does not imply that the particular organization has reached the end of its usefulness in every church, but in the instance noted such is evidently the case. It should be a source of satisfaction that a new plan of activity has met with favor, and the new instrument is proving a success. It is doubtless difficult for those who have devoted themselves to the older agency to accept the situation, but the experience is not unusual. They have the choice of devising some method of infusing new life and interest into the brotherhood, or of yielding

gracefully to the logic of events and letting it disappear. There may be room and need for both organizations in the work of the church, in which case the older one must become more effective. New leadership, or a new program, may solve the problem, and leave the field open for the church night plan to function in its own sphere. At least it would seem that such an experiment should be tried.

There is no virtue in abandoning an enterprise until and unless it is clear that it is no longer useful. It may well be that the two forms of activity may be made to appeal to different groups in the church membership, or may attract an increasing number of constituents. This is an age of fresh experimentation in church work. The prayer meeting, once accepted as an essential midweek feature of church life, is disappearing and has in many instances been replaced by some form of church night program in which worship, entertainment and refreshments are combined in an attractive project, to the enrichment of the church's life and the satisfaction of the community. There is no reason why such a device should interfere with the work of a properly planned and efficiently conducted men's brotherhood. Only experimentation can decide the matter. Meantime it would seem that whichever best meets the needs of the church should have the right of way, unless there is room for both. In any case the leaders of both organizations should take counsel with each other in the spirit of mutual good will and with the desire to make the church the most efficient instrument possible in meeting the needs of the community.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

This organization should be abolished. It was said of Hannibal's march across the Alps that it was greatly impeded by the number of asses that accompanied the troops. Dr. Rainsford's success lay partly in his ability to kill or-

ganizations which had outlived their purpose. A "brotherhood" dominated by the spirit of unbrotherliness and absence of cooperation may be a leaven of the Pharisees in the parish. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

JOHN H. MELISH

### CASE 27

In their zeal for the missionary cause, the women of the home and foreign missionary societies are eager to secure the first opportunity to present their work to the congregation. Each wishes to be first in making its appeal, since it is felt that the congregation will give more readily to the first cause which is presented than to the second. This issue is not so serious in itself but is symptomatic of a cleavage between the organizations which is of long standing and carries over into the other women's work in the church. Since you are destined to be the arbiter of all such disputes, the presidents of the two societies come to you to "decide between them." What will you do?

This problem involves again the question of the organization of the work of the church and of its various departments (cf. Case 22). Where an adequate unification of all interests is lacking, appeal is made to the minister to settle conflicts and this embarrasses him and forces him to be a rather arbitrary dictator. With a unified budget all such special appeals for funds are eliminated and the different societies receive fairer consideration and more money. However, if a minister has to decide between two missionary organizations, as the case assumes, he might have them take turns in first place in alternate years.

The more serious problem of a "cleavage" can be met by a unified program for women's work. In my own experience, to avoid competition between the Ladies' Aid Society and the Women's Missionary Society, we formed

a Women's Society to which all women of the church automatically belonged, and made these two societies departments of the inclusive organization. We added a department for the aid society, and an educational department to cooperate with the church school, and a social department to do calling and to help with social occasions. Chairmen of these divisions were appointed and reports were made to the regular weekly meetings of the general society.

This plan worked so well that later it was expanded into the form of a regular Woman's Club having all the features of a federated woman's club, and maintaining those features naturally belonging to such a club within a church. There are no dues or other monies raised by this organization, since all expenses are taken care of by the common treasury of the church. Women of all ages and types work together under this arrangement and the experience of many years has proved its great practical and cultural value. Too often the typical club woman is not interested in the traditional church societies, and just as often the typical church woman does not find her place in the usual club. Each type needs the other, and together they make a much stronger and more valuable factor in the life of the church. The coordination and unification of these societies, together with the unified financial system of the whole church, has eliminated friction, strengthened all the causes represented, and added to the happiness and efficiency of the minister and congregation.

EDWARD S. AMES

This is not zeal for the missionary cause which has split these women into rival groups, contending for the right to present their cause first to the congregation. This is silly, childish pride, and should be recognized as such.

It does not require nor deserve an arbiter for the dispute, nor should any minister waste a minute trying to "decide between them." It is, however, aptly designated as a symptom, and should be examined as such. And the illness which it betrays will not yield lightly, but must be treated with slow patience. Here is the prescription which is indicated:

(1) A series of sermons in which the "walls of partition" between home and foreign missions are successively broken down, by wise use of illustrative material that will represent both sides as being parts of a unified whole.

(2) A meeting in which the two women's groups meet together, and report their success in terms of a single total, combining their separate receipts.

(3) A series of women's meetings in which each group presents its side to the other, and the minister welds them both into one.

(4) A unified mission budget, with all mission gifts pooled for skillful allotment through the efforts of a well informed committee.

(5) Then the fervent singing of "Christ to the world we bring."

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

#### CASE 28

The church is proud of its Boy Scout troop, and the lads almost idolize their scoutmaster. Three or four times in the spring and fall, he conducts an overnight hike for the boys. The troop leaves on Saturday afternoon and does not return until Sunday afternoon. The superintendent of the church school regards this as disloyal and perhaps as irreligious. He comes to you, the minister, to force you to decide whether such a "demoralizing force, which breaks down habits of Sunday school attendance," is to be tolerated. What will you do?

The Reverend Percy X. Smith accepted the two-bit cigar that Mr. Perry Cone offered him. Instead of lighting it he began to chew it. He ran his fingers through his hair and propped his feet on the study desk.

Mr. Cone, across the desk from him, had Percy Smith in a corner. It was not pleasant in the little study. Mr. Cone besides being superintendent of the Sunday school was superintendent of the Pineville cotton mill and was a large contributor to the finances of Mr. Smith's church.

"I must not truckle to this man," Percy said to himself. "Let him beat me in this and I'm ruined. Besides, he's wrong."

"Were you ever a boy?" he asked Mr. Cone.

"Yes. Of course," the superintendent answered, a little shortly.

"Did you ever go swimming on Sunday afternoons when you were a boy? Honest, now?"

"Well, yes, I did, sometimes."

"And I'll bet you 'looked rabbit gums' and went fishing when you could sneak off and ran around with the young roughnecks of the village every Sunday you could."

"There's some truth in the charge," said Mr. Cone with a bit of pride.

"And today you are superintendent of a cotton mill and of a Sunday school. It didn't ruin you.

"There are two points in this matter, Mr. Cone. One is that we are dealing with boys, not adults. The other is that they are absent only four Sundays in the year.

"Our Scout troop has brought boys into our Sunday school and held them. It has done a good piece of work. There are boys in it and in the Sunday school who never attended any Sunday school before the troop was organized.

"Mr. Bonner has given a great deal of his time to the boys. They love and admire him, and he is a good man,

a Christian man, the right kind of man for them to love and admire. Sometimes I feel that he has done more for the boys than I have done for any group in the church.

"I wouldn't want to see him take them away over Sunday more than four or five times a year. But he holds a religious service for them whenever he has them out on Sunday, just as he does when they are all here in the church. And they don't do anything very worldly or wicked."

"The boys enjoy the outings. I can't see that any harm is done. They are just boys. It happens only four times a year and Mr. Bonner has promised me that it won't happen more often. I think we ought to encourage Mr. Bonner and the boys by our approval of the hikes. It may be that they get more on those Sundays than we give them here at the church."

"After all, Mr. Cone, you spend six weeks in the mountains every summer, away from your church, and I have heard you don't attend Sunday school every Sunday."

"I consent," said Mr. Cone, grinning.

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

Week-end holidays of church members are one of the chief reasons for the decline in church attendance, as Catholics, Jews and Protestants will testify. The Catholics meet this situation by having many early short masses, and along the highways signs inviting their people to attend the next mass. The Jews celebrate late Friday afternoons more than the seventh day of the week. The man who draws the largest religious crowd in New York has his assembly on Wednesday night, and in England the popular service is on Sunday at six P.M. after the people return from their outing and before the evening meal.

We Protestants go on having our eleven o'clock service, of regulation length, on Sunday, and berate the people who

attend for what we call the sins of the absentees. At every service I attended one vacation, at different churches, the ministers preached on the duty of church attendance. Customs change and church attendance at eleven A.M. or eight P.M. is an honored custom, but it is honored in the breach today by an increasing number of otherwise loyal church people.

The superintendent of the church school will find that he does not promote habits of attendance, either in school or church, by this attitude of opposition to the Scout troop. The minister can have a brief service for his Scouts before they leave or he can arrange to have a service at some time during their week-end hike. In this way he will promote their attendance on other Sundays when they do not go on a hike, and keep them in touch with religious things. He will also teach them that "neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem but in spirit and in heart the true worshiper shall worship the Father."

JOHN H. MELISH

#### CASE 29

The program of the church school is being directed by a capable young woman who has been trained in the newer methods of religious education. She, with the aid of the teachers, has developed a well integrated program which aims at character education and centers about problems of social and personal adjustment, rather than the teaching of the Bible. A common complaint of parents is that insufficient emphasis is being given to the teaching of the Bible. They feel themselves incapable or unprepared to teach religion to their children at home, but are sure that their children are not receiving the same kind of instruction that they themselves received when children. The director is baffled by the problem and comes to you for advice. What will you propose to her?

This common complaint may or may not be justified. If there is, unhappily, good ground for it, so far as the Bible is concerned, the school's curriculum and teaching methods should be revised. If it is not justified, the school nonetheless should earnestly seek parental understanding and cooperation. Departmental meetings should be held, in which teachers are given abundant opportunity to acquaint parents with the use they are attempting to make of the Bible and to suggest the need of biblical "homework" with parental assistance! In some cases, parents may be asked to cooperate with teachers in the *planning* of units of study. In all cases, parents should be advised at the beginning of a unit what materials, including biblical passages, are to be used; and what the objective is; and how the home may work together with the school.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

This is a problem of reconciliation. The socially trained young woman should base her teaching on the Bible and let it be interpreted by the Bible. She should at the same time try to induce home cooperation by establishing contacts which would cultivate understanding. The reconciliation between the conservative and progressive groups, between those who hold exclusively to the individual gospel and those who embrace exclusively a social gospel, must be effected, if Christianity is to have a full, well rounded instruction. It can be done and should be undertaken with intelligence and with conscientious effort.

There are no truths so vital or so attractive to the church school as those contained in the Bible. I believe that all the essential matters pertaining to character education, and to personal and social adjustment, possible in the curriculum of the church school, can and should be presented

in connection with the Bible. I think it is very unfortunate if those in charge of the religious instruction have no training in these matters, just as I think it most unfortunate if highly specialized training on their part should be exercised with ignorance of or neglect of the Holy Scriptures. A church school should be a Bible school, but a Bible school should be a real school and so ordered as to fit for life as well as for heaven.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

## VII

### OTHER ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS

EVERY organization, religious or secular, is confronted with two typical tension patterns. The one is that which exists between the elders and the novitiates. The other, which may or may not be closely related to the first, is the conflict between the conformists, who wish to continue the observances, rituals and procedures that are enshrined in the affection of the people, and the innovators, who long for variety and are not afraid of change.

Because all these groups are represented in his church and parish the minister has greatest need for breadth of view and detachment. Whether he be young or old, he must be free from the biases of his own age group. Only then will he be able to interpret the special interests, the gaiety, the carefree nonchalant spirit of youth to age, and at the same time help the young people to appreciate the value of the heritage which is cherished by their elders.

#### CASE 30

A kindly, retired minister is one of the most regular attendants at the young people's meetings. As he says, he enjoys their companionship and the atmosphere of vitality and enthusiasm. However, the young people are less appreciative of his presence. They are somewhat irked by his lengthy participation in the discussions at their meetings, and finally in despair come to the minister, asking if he cannot give them some relief.

Some years ago one of our Protestant churches in America found it necessary to establish an upper age limit

of thirty for membership in its young people's society. Too frequently a group would organize an Epworth League and maintain control of it after all members of the group had reached middle age. One of the trying situations a pastor meets is deciding what to do with a young married people's class when the members continue in it until they are grandparents. Almost as embarrassing is the older person in the church who wants to remain young by associating with young people. He is always saying, "One is as old as he acts, you know." If he happens to be a retired minister then the difficulty is increased.

Not long since a pastor said to me, "Blessed is the man who does not have in his congregation a retired minister!" And his view is shared by many. However, I remember also the preacher who said, "I am fortunate enough in my present pastorate to have in my congregation a retired minister of my Conference." The difference in attitude may be due to a difference in the temperament of the retired ministers, but it may likewise be due to a difference in the administrative genius of the active pastors.

There are so many things a retired minister of advanced years can do to aid the pastor of the church he attends. I met one the other day in a Texas town who said, "Our little church cannot afford to pay a caretaker, but I am physically strong enough to look after our church property and am glad to do so as my service." In a Missouri city I know an old minister who says, "My pastor lets me visit the older members of the church whose language I speak, and who want more frequent visits than the pastor can make." In an eastern city an able and vigorous retired minister is teaching a class of old people who have come to the Sunday school for fifty years and will not quit. There are so many helpful services a retired minister can render.

If an elderly minister persists in attending the young

people's meetings the pastor may have to ask him to stop. But there ought to be an easier way than that. The retired minister may be given a real task in the church.

IVAN LEE HOLT

The Reverend Percy X. Smith squirmed uncomfortably in his chair, looking across his desk into the pious and kind face of a gray-haired man.

"It's like shooting a rabbit in its bed," Percy reflected as he tightened his tie.

"You have been a loyal member of our congregation ever since you retired from the ministry and settled here, Mr. Carson," he said aloud.

"I love the church," Mr. Carson said.

"You have been a minister. Well, I want your advice. I am faced with the necessity of taking a step that may offend a good member of this church. If I do not take it one of the important organizations of the church will suffer. So I want your advice. Shall I risk offending one person, or to avoid offending that person shall I risk the welfare of an important organization of the church?"

"You have no choice," said Mr. Carson. "You must risk offending one person. It may be that you won't offend him."

"He loves the church."

"If he loves it enough he won't be offended."

"I think he loves it enough. Mr. Carson, you are the man."

"I?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"The young people. They don't want you to attend their meetings. They say you talk too long, preach at them, cramp them and deprive them of ease and freedom

of expression. Last Sunday night they say you talked a half-hour after their program was ended. They say that you are sixty-five and they are under twenty. They respect you and like you but they want their meetings left to themselves. They don't feel free and easy with you there. They have talked to me about it for a year.

"Finally I decided that you love the church enough not to be offended, so I have told you about it. What I have told you is the truth.

"I wouldn't offend you for anything in the world. But I don't think you should be offended. Frankly, I think the thing for you to do is to laugh about it and forget it. They'll probably be inviting you back in six months to make talks to them.

"It's all right, isn't it, Mr. Carson?"

"Yes," the old man said. He didn't laugh but he smiled a little.

"I love the church," he said.

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

### CASE 31

Some of the older members of the church have become disturbed since they learned that there are no chaperons at the young people's social affairs, which sometimes do not break up until midnight. As a solution these adults urge that young people be denied the use of church property for social affairs unless an older person is in attendance. When this matter was broached in the cabinet of the young people's society there was vehement opposition, since they felt that their integrity had been called into question. Their president comes to you for support. What will you say?

This question presents two points of view always encountered in church work: first, the elderly people becoming disturbed about "flaming youth," and in turn, the young people resenting the action of the elders.

That young people rise up vehemently when the elders discuss their affairs is nothing to become perturbed over, unless the complaint is just. Some elders can paint blacker devils than hell itself holds, and "panning" the young folks often becomes a favorite pastime with them. American youth, and even elders, are wonderfully fair if they see each other's problems in the proper light.

The president would be told that they are setting a poor precedent by staying out until midnight unchaperoned. The honor of Christ's church must not at any time be brought into question. Their actions, like those of Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion. Every life should be willing to stand investigation. I would present this entire matter from the angle of good sportsmanship. Young people's work is a game. The grandest game on earth. No game but what has its referee and its penalties. As good sports they should continue to welcome any suggestion on the part of the elders. As fair-minded young people, they are to have good terminal facilities. We shall play hard while we play and not drag out the evening's entertainment until midnight. Then in winter there is the angle of light and heat, and always the matter of keeping the poor sexton awake until the "wee hours." Recreation ceases to be recreation if wholesome and needed rest is sacrificed.

Now for the older folks. It would be definitely understood that the young people are not under any circumstances to be driven out of the church. Youth always has been on the march. The church must forever give direction! The elders must not become "hard-boiled" about the youth problem. Every group must be given consideration from the cradle to the grave. The elders should not make themselves offensive. Where young people are discriminated against, the church rapidly perishes. As lead-

ers we should love and encourage, instead of becoming harsh. "These jewels" should be our chief concern. They are the church of the morrow. Surely we do not intend to drive them away because of occasional irregularities. Elders must not expect perfection or even a sanctimonious placid type of static goodness. They should welcome action! A young man or a young woman who is full of life and can raise a "revolution" is splendid material for the ministry or the missionary cause.

The wise pastor will ever keep a watchful and sympathetic eye on the youth of his church. He will work with them until the "problem" is turned to a joy and a mighty force for righteousness. Those of us who have known the old Christian Endeavor, with its one type of meeting for all groups, turn with joy to the new program — the senior forum, the university and business group, the senior high school group and the junior high group — with a beautiful central devotional period for all, and separate discussion groups for each.

No church that guides its youth in recreational activities as well as in spiritual emphasis will go amiss. A healthy social life is necessary, to counteract present-day trends of dancing, card playing, vicious amusements. For these, if the pastor is willing, may be substituted camps, roller skating, ice skating, outdoor and indoor activity of varied types that will bring joy and inspiration to all. It will work the hide off a minister to execute this program, but it gets results. It is no accident, but the result of hard work, supervision and prayer, that twelve young people at one time in some churches are preparing for active Christian service.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

I would deal sympathetically with the problem brought by the president. I would say: The older members do not need to be disturbed, but their worry is natural. They lived their youth in a more restrained atmosphere. They find it difficult to accustom themselves to the unconventional social habits of modern youth. They read with unconcealed alarm newspaper accounts of youth running wild. Their sense of disturbance in this case grows out of their affectionate concern for you, rather than from their distrust. You must be patient with them. And why not, out of deference to them and to a general custom of long standing, still maintained in many quarters, arrange to invite to each of your parties some older friend of the group or some parent?

Here again is revealed the advantage of having behind every young people's society an organization of the parents, with occasional joint meetings and with frequent commerce between the groups. Talk this plan over with the president, and get him if possible to take the initiative in developing such a fostering body. This idea is not mere theory. A number of churches which I know are securing superior results by this simple device. It works.

HUGH E. BROWN

#### CASE 32

The drama group has decided to combine pleasure with service, and proposes to present a play with the object of raising money for Christmas baskets. The only suitable place for the presentation of the play (which has a thoroughly moral, though not specifically religious theme) is the sanctuary of the church. Every time the worship room is utilized for such a purpose there is opposition on the part of a number of the members who object to such a "sacrilege." How is this issue to be adjudicated?

I object to the word "adjudicated," especially as it refers to the function of a minister in a church. Here is a problem which represents the whole educative process of bruising one generation against another, one group against another, in the glorious experience of spiritual and moral and mental growth. To "adjudicate" such an issue (i.e., for the pastor to find some way of interposing a solution which settles the immediate question) seems to me not only unwise but unfair to the institution.

Which board in this church is given responsibility for allotting the various uses of the sanctuary? How are requests for such use normally placed before the board? How can the drama group most effectively present its case? Are there by-laws which rule on the matter? Should these by-laws be amended? How can an amendment be prepared and presented? Is the board representative of the mind and temper of the church? How are the board members nominated and elected? Could the young people and the drama group affect these elections? Meanwhile can everybody concerned keep fair-minded and open-hearted toward everybody else, as the issue is patiently resolved? As for the pastor, he has two duties:

(1) To vote, as a conscientious citizen of the church, with his fellow members, whenever a question is put before the group.

(2) To preach the principles of Christian practice with such clarity and definiteness as to win men's minds to decisions which are truly representative of the kingdom of God.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

There was a time when drama was a medium for the expression of religious devotion. The Passion Play at Oberammergau has been given continuously for more

than three hundred years. Miracle plays and passion plays were presented here and there through the church centuries before the villagers at Oberammergau first gave their play.

Within the past generation there has been a great revival of interest in religious pageantry. This interest may be traced to the popularity of moving pictures, and to the growing conviction that most people can be reached through the eye. It often is the result of an earnest desire to give the children and young people of the church a new and more active means of expressing their religious faith. The regular program of church activities has come to include Christmas and Easter pageants; in the course of the year the dramatic organization of the church will probably present other plays. It is increasingly my conviction that plays presented by church dramatic groups should have a religious or character-building theme. Other dramatic organizations in the community will be offering other types of plays. But that has nothing to do with the problem before us, except that it is presumed that a church organization's play has been carefully read and approved by either the pastor or the director of religious education before rehearsals begin.

Should such a play be given in the church, and should a charge for admission be made if members of the church disapprove? These are the questions. In my own church no admission charge is made for anything presented in the church sanctuary, and no tickets can be sold there; but then that is a place of worship only, and in the building is a recreation hall where plays can be presented. What is my brother minister to do when he has only a one-room church building?

The minister must be sure that the play is a proper one for presentation. Then he should follow this course: He

should see those who object, talk with them about the widespread use of pageantry in churches today, and seek to convince them that the young people of the church need this medium of expression if they are to be held by the church. If there are objections to ticket sales then an offering may be taken in a brief preliminary service of worship. Such an offering will yield as much as ticket sales, and will eliminate that objectionable feature. The participants could be reminded that they stand in the pulpit of a church, and not on the stage of a theater; their attitude toward the sanctuary and in it may be controlled by such a reminder. In the preliminary service of worship, if such be appropriate, the minister's brief talk may prepare the way for the drama. If the play be such that no preliminary service of worship seems appropriate, then the minister's talk may set forth fully the objectives and answer any criticisms.

IVAN LEE HOLT

#### CASE 33

Assume that you, as a minister who is convinced that the teachings of Jesus are pertinent to the solution of contemporary problems, have been preaching occasional sermons on such topics as "economic and spiritual insecurity." A number of the leaders of your church, including some of those who are financially well-to-do, contend that you are overstepping the bounds of the ministerial function, and that you should either "preach religion" or leave. You know that others of the congregation have found a new and larger conception of religion and also a measure of hope through your ministry, but the church is becoming divided. What will be your plan of action?

The minister, of course, should claim the whole of life as his province. He should feel free to discuss any situation in which the welfare of human beings is involved, pro-

vided only that he does so from a definitely religious point of view. Laymen have reason and abundant right to protest if, when they go to church, they hear nothing different than they might have heard had they gone to a political meeting. Lay objection to the "social gospel" is surely understandable and forgivable in cases where the preacher has, in fact, no gospel to proclaim but only the more or less illuminating views of a current liberalism or radicalism. One may also suspect that no little resentment in the pew is due to the deplorable fact that the pulpit, although it has spoken truth, has not spoken it in love but only in that "burning indignation" which is often but the reflection of a contemptuous, self-righteous heart. A little genuine humility in the pulpit, added to persistent loving-kindness, would contribute greatly to its effectiveness in the handling of ticklish, controversial questions.

But the pulpit needs to be supplemented by the forum. What is said in the sanctuary needs to be informally discussed in the parish house, or in private homes, under conditions which permit of a "give and take" relationship between clergy and laity. The preacher then has a chance, under direct questioning, to clarify his position. He also has a chance to learn something from intelligent criticism. Result: more tolerance, better understanding, a growing awareness of the ethical and social *demands* of Christianity, a growing desire to think and act religiously in daily life, and the discovery of concrete ways of giving expression to Christian idealism.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

There will always be individuals in any congregation who think the minister goes out of bounds in preaching the essential things of Christianity. If he rebukes personal sins, such as dissipation, marital infidelity, laziness, luxuri-

ous living, snobbishness, pride and selfishness, some people are certain to dislike it. The minister should be prepared by the nature of his work, and should have been further prepared during his training, to see his work as one of high idealism. In the nature of the case he is to interpret life as it goes on and he is obligated to emphasize the need for radical changes in customs and in human nature itself. However, he must use common sense. If he antagonizes his people he makes himself ineffective in educating and influencing them.

It is important for him to be friendly with those who are most critical, and to have free and full conversations with them upon the subjects at issue. There is more than one side to every question and the manifestation of real desire to understand all sides is necessary. Only a fair-minded and judicious attitude is able to inspire confidences and elicit all the facts. When a minister talks with his "rich" members, he should ask sincerely about the facts. He will find that the rich man also is troubled and wants to find a way to be Christian even if it costs him something. The same is true of the laboring man. He also is human. The difficulty may be greater for him since his outlook and experience may be more limited. The minister may well put himself in the role of a student of the problems and not rush into half-baked sermons on the touchy subjects. Nevertheless, the subjects pertaining to economics and social justice can be dealt with at their foundations. These foundations lie in the Christian conception of the importance of human life, of all individuals, and of the need for sympathy and understanding across all lines of class and station. There is also the historical approach to all social problems. The story of the industrial revolution which is still going on reveals the sources and the causes of many of the maladjustments in present social relations. The

church was for a long time on the side of slavery, of the subjection of women, and of other conditions which, with greater enlightenment, have been changed.

The minister should be free, but he can be free and effective only when he himself has understanding and sympathy as well as piety and courage.

EDWARD S. AMES

#### CASE 34

Two classes in the intermediate department of the church school have been studying the meaning of Christian brotherhood. Out of the discussion has come a suggestion which the children heartily favor, namely, that a class of boys and girls from a nearby Negro church be invited to share with them in a class session and later in a morning church service. Some of the parents hear rumors of the plan before it is completed, and enter vigorous objections to it. The children will obviously be somewhat disillusioned if the plan falls through, but the large majority of the adult members are "unprepared" for such an innovation. How would you handle the matter?

In a Y.W.C.A. conference a young woman declared she had not known there was a race problem until she came into the "Y." In her high school there were colored and white, in her labor union were both races, and though at their socials they did not dance together they were all friends and comrades. In the economic struggle both races knew well they stood or fell together, and this common knowledge kept them together.

The more we talk about the race problem the farther apart we drift. White mothers are scared to death lest their daughters or sons marry colored boys or girls. The possibility of such a thing seldom if ever becomes an actuality or even a probability. It is a fear without any real foundation, but like most fears it cannot be dissipated by

discussion. The parents will never be "prepared." If the minister wishes to try preparation let him go to individuals, one by one, and not discuss the question before a group. Let the children go ahead with their plan of visiting and being visited, whatever some parents may say. The important thing is to have the children catch some meaning of the truth that "in Christ Jesus there is neither Greek, nor barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."

JOHN H. MELISH

In this case, as in many another, the church must undertake to educate, from the Christian standpoint, both children and parents. So far as the parents are concerned, this may be done (in part) from the pulpit, in a sermon or sermons interpretative of the Christian position in respect of race. It may also, and perhaps more effectively, be done through a parent-teacher organization. Notified in advance of this "project," and given an adequate explanation of what it has in view in the way of Christian attitudes toward persons of another race, few parents would offer any vigorous objection; whereas many parents, if taken by surprise, not knowing what the school was about, would probably feel apprehensive, to say the least. Also, from the children's standpoint, care should be taken to avoid the impression that this somewhat dramatic venture is but an interesting, not to say shock-producing, stunt; which, I take it, means among other things that the venture should not be permitted to come to a sudden, pitiful end in this one Sunday morning service.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

## VIII

### INTERCHURCH PROBLEMS

THE schismatic sect—and at one time or other most denominations were such—is essentially a fighting organization, doing battle for its principles. It is in open and avowed conflict with those who fail to see or appreciate the truth of its distinctive gospel. Time was when the manner of baptism or form of church polity was a sectarian issue, and ministers of competing denominations zealously denounced offending heretics. In most communions such attitudes are a thing of the past. The internecine sectarian strife within Protestantism has declined and gradually ministers and laity have become tolerant of the beliefs and polity of other denominations.

Nevertheless a new crop of schismatic groups is ever arising to challenge the procedures and complacency of the old. The former actively proselyte the members of the latter, and frankly refuse to be a party to any comity agreement. These groups form part of the pattern of religion in the community and not a few ministerial problems are involved in their presence. Relationships between major denominations are friendly. Yet in spite of all the joint services which have been held, all the meetings of comity commissions and all the kind speeches of fraternal delegates, Protestant churches are still a long way from presenting a united front to the materialistic, nonethical forces of a quasi-Christian society. The progressive minister will seize every opportunity to cooperate with other

churches in his area in order that religion as a vital force may survive in the community.

### CASE 35

Assume that you are the pastor of a downtown church. There are other churches of your denomination scattered over the city. The population in your own area is moving out; the neighborhood is deteriorating. Many of your members live nearer to other churches than to your own, and some of the pastors of these churches are urging your members who live near them to unite with the local congregation. If, however, your church is to continue an effective ministry it needs the support of these members. How would you approach this problem?

This problem can be adequately handled only by denominational conference. The Congregational Union of Chicago has developed a "Fellowship Plan" by which the struggling churches in depleted areas of the inner city are reinforced by the thriving churches of the suburban rim. A genuine mutualism has been developed. For example, the oldest Congregational church in Chicago—the New England Church—is linked with my own, the First Church of Evanston. New England members moving to Evanston are encouraged to retain their city membership, and unite with my church on an associate basis. Prosperous members of my church are invited to become associate members of New England Church, to attend at intervals and to make some financial contribution. This commerce between these two churches has been fruitful, even in its elementary stages. Every enfeebled Congregational church in Chicago is linked in some beneficial way with a strong church or group of churches.

This experience and experiment point the way to successful maintenance of institutions in needy areas. Details

of this plan can be had by writing to the Chicago Congregational Union, 19 S. La Salle Street. I know of nothing better to suggest.

HUGH E. BROWN

Neither the pastor of the suburban nor the pastor of the downtown church will become confused if all angles are considered. As churchmen, we must be interested in each other's development; both the downtown and the suburban churches have a place to fill.

The American trend — as the city grows, the population moves out. There are no slums in northern Europe. Neighborhoods there do not deteriorate. The downtown churches throughout the world have always continued to dominate the life of the city and the nation. While there is still room for expansion in our American city life, the present real-estate setup permits certain downtown residential properties to deteriorate. The downtown church of every denomination should be the cathedral church of tomorrow. New York has its Trinity and St. Patrick's, Chicago its Fourth Presbyterian, Minneapolis its Central Lutheran, Seattle its First Presbyterian, etc. These churches did not move out into the suburbs. Property is as valuable to the church as to business. This the church should recognize. Other denominations in early New York history had the same opportunities as Trinity, but they followed the trends of population, always selling and moving out, and today have no outstanding church in the heart of the world's greatest metropolis. Most downtown churches have given birth to other churches. That is as it should be; however, the home base must continue to be maintained, and should definitely be taken into consideration by the denomination as a whole. The downtown church has a right to appeal to loyalties and tradi-

tions, and if strategically located should continue to maintain one of the finest buildings of the denomination, if for nothing else than for transients alone.

Where the church is no longer in the center of its community the present property may still be used if the ministry is wide-aware to its opportunity. Protestant churches are now being reclaimed in our larger centers by Roman Catholic or free-lance denominations, meeting the needs of underprivileged people. In a mid-western city a flourishing congregation found itself overcrowded in a congested part of the city. It moved westward into the residential district, built a plant for three hundred thousand dollars, and lost its identity. One of the more recent varieties of churches took over the old plant, and with enthusiasm and zeal is conducting one of the most successful congregations in the city, having paid for the building in a remarkably few months.

When shall we as a church learn the lesson that the gospel is for all men? The pastor of a downtown church who fails to recognize this truth and the significance of city trends will find himself the last in the line of illustrious leaders, instead of God's prophet calling the church to greater heights.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

#### CASE 36

Assume that you are serving a church in a residential district of a city with a population of a hundred thousand or more. Most of the members of your church come from the immediate vicinity. You are made aware, however, that downtown churches of the same denomination also draw many of their members from your local parish. In fact, parish visitors from downtown churches call regularly in your community and seek to obtain new members from it. What policy would you and your church adopt in such a situation?

The one general answer is: Build a church program so vital and appealing that it will develop sufficient effectiveness and loyalty to keep members and people of the neighborhood interested and at work. The neighborhood church has an advantage in serving whole families, and the attendance of children is the key to family interest. The social life of various groups is more easily promoted by a church in a residential community. Children, youth, and women are better served by a church within a short distance of their homes. Pastoral work can be made more natural and useful in a homogeneous residence district. The outlying church is likely to be newer and has the opportunity to develop more modern and adequate buildings. There are also likely to be young married people in the district who may be wrought into a close companionship in promoting the church, and who in the course of time will be the leaders in its life. They offer a chance for the cultivation of newer and richer ideas of the religious life, and are more easily interested in experiments in new methods and types of organization.

The problem of competition from the downtown church is complicated by the fact that it is usually an older church which has built strong attachments in the lives of older people and families. It is probably better known and has advantages which only time and ripened associations can give. As people move out into new areas many individuals are held by the old ties and often continue a sentimental attachment after former habits of attendance are broken. If the churches in question belong to a denomination with a strong central organization it may be possible to control the distribution of members to some extent, but church relations depend very much upon individual choice and preference under any polity. It is in the very nature of things that congregations work for their own

development, and this fact should be considered in locating and building new churches, as well as in the maintenance of older ones. There should be recognition of "professional ethics" between ministers and churches but the drawing power of personalities and congregations can scarcely be regulated. Each unit must be free to appeal to its own public whether near or far, if the appeal is made in good spirit and by legitimate methods.

EDWARD S. AMES

If there are to be downtown churches in a metropolitan city, they must exist through the support of people who live in distant residential districts. They must draw their membership from neighborhoods in which smaller churches do exist, and must send their parish visitors to recruit such members. And there must be downtown churches in metropolitan cities, if the city itself is to be adequately reached by the gospel.

But as pastor of a residential church on the fringes, I should try to take courage from the realization that there are two kinds of people in my neighborhood. There are people who want and need the whir and whiz of a big downtown church. Distance means nothing to them; they live their lives in the city, not in the neighborhood; they are not to be counted on by the little church. There are other people whose roots go deep into their local soil, who have children that play in the streets and go to the neighborhood school, and have friends in the community Sunday school. Scout troops, and women's circles, and men's classes mean much to them. They do not want to journey far to church on Sunday. They are your people. And they are, by far, the best people in town for a church to absorb into its work.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

## CASE 37

Your church has been giving liberally to the support of an institutional church which is serving an underprivileged area, where the bulk of the population is non-Protestant. Some of your members, liberal givers, learn this and discover that, in the evangelistic sense, few souls are being saved. Consequently, they urge that the church withdraw its support. The head of the institution believes that the needs of his area call for a primary stress on social service, and he has shaped his program to that end. Two entirely different conceptions of missionary work are involved. How will you deal with this situation?

This problem is one I have faced for years. The church I have served so long has a social settlement in a crowded and very poor district. For twenty-five years the institution has been serving an area which formerly was the breeding-ground for a large number of the city's criminals. Out of it have come members for other churches in the city, as its people move out to better residential areas. This institutional church, which began as a mission, has become more and more of a social settlement.

Throughout its history some members of the board of managers have insisted that the church emphasis must be central in the program. On the other hand, certain members of the board, seeing the many social and industrial problems in the district where the institution is located, want to help meet and solve these problems. They want a social settlement. So we have experimented. For a few years we have emphasized the church program, naming a minister as pastor and superintendent. He has had all the organizations of an active church, promoting the Sunday school and holding services of worship. The social service program has been incidental. Then for a few years we have put in charge as superintendent a social service worker, who has emphasized a ministry through clubs, recreation and

night classes, and has cared for the needy. A minister has come in to preach at the chapel on Sunday and to conduct Sunday school. The church program has been incidental. By alternating emphases through a period of twenty-five years we have come to a conclusion which is practically unanimous. We are sure that the social settlement is needed more than the evangelizing church. Our conclusion is based on a trial of both over a period of years. We would not close the chapel, and we desire a religious atmosphere around our institution, but our program must include a transformation of the community, as well as the salvation of individuals.

A minister may not have the opportunity for demonstration such as came to me. His course should include:

(1) A study of the history of institutional churches and social settlements. The home mission board of his denomination may furnish any minister a great deal of information, and he can get more from the social settlements of the country.

(2) A survey of the community served should be made. With full information in his possession, the minister can meet the board of managers of his institution. On a blackboard he can write down need after need, asking each time the question, "Can the church we have meet this need?"

(3) If members of the board of managers are not yet convinced, then it may be necessary to put new members on the board, if the minister is sure he is right. That is a last resort, and I avoided it in the early years of our mission by securing from wealthy persons contributions to endow specific social service activities, thus making certain that these would be a part of the program. The redemption of the whole community is after all the greatest challenge that can come to a spiritually minded church.

IVAN LEE HOLT

The conception of the nature and purpose of the church is being greatly broadened in our generation. There are still many people who define the entire Christian task in terms of evangelism and the addition of members to the congregation. Yet any competent survey of religious work in the foreign or the home field gives evidence of the fact that there are many localities in which the specifically evangelistic approach is ineffective and self-defeating. Those who are in charge of such outreachings of the gospel message must judge as to the type of evangelism which is best suited to the community.

In many instances the spirit of the Christian evangel may be interpreted best in terms of education, sanitary and health ministries, improved agricultural procedure, or industrial and economic adjustments. These techniques do not imply any indifference to the ultimate meaning of the Christian adventure, which is directed to both the salvation of individuals and the transformation of the social order. Nothing but education as to the scope and purpose of the gospel can deliver a congregation from the narrower and ultimately less effective method of meeting the church's responsibility for the salvation of the world. That education may be supplied in the local church through pulpit messages wisely and tactfully delivered, through such missionary and socially informative literature as ought to be in the church library of every congregation, and through the distribution of such journals as give information regarding modern types of social ministry at home and in the fields of the younger churches.

The saving of souls involves always the saving of communities. If effective service is performed in giving a community the proper interpretation of the ideals of Jesus, his concern not only for "souls" but also for the society in which those souls must live, no anxiety need be felt regard-

ing the ultimate evangelistic results of such a ministry. The "full gospel" is never proclaimed if any aspect of life is neglected, whether it be the physical, intellectual, social, economic or religious phase.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

### CASE 38

As a minister begins his pastoral duties at a new church he discovers that the people are devoted to their own local institution and its program, but have few interests of a religious nature outside their own community, and evince little desire to support any denominational enterprise. This attitude is reflected in their budget and program. If the minister should come to you with such a problem, how would you advise him?

"What you need is a program of education for your people," said the Reverend Percy X. Smith to the minister who had spent the morning describing the ingrown provincialism of his congregation.

"You have some good people but they are selfish and earth-bound. Their horizon needs to be enlarged. They need to understand the gospel. The gospel is not narrow and local. It's universal. It's missionary. It's timeless. It speaks all languages and is color-blind. Your people don't understand it."

"Your own preaching from Sunday to Sunday can do more than anything else to push back the horizon of the people. Preach on the ageless universal nature of the gospel. Preach missionary sermons. Tell them of what is going on in the church in Europe and Asia and Africa. Preach the social aspects of the gospel, applying it to the social and economic problems of our country. Tell them of national missions, the church's colleges, the orphanages, and all the work of their denomination. Bring in outsiders

representing the departments of your denomination's work to speak to them. And a few speakers from other denominations would help.

"But the burden is principally upon you. Have a large vision and a wide map yourself and your people will enlarge their vision and their maps. If you will hammer away at it and refuse to be discouraged and not expect immediate results, you will see the people grow. If you stay there long enough you will see them change. You will see a people who sat in darkness come out into the light."

"On the other hand, they can make you provincial. That is what they did to their other pastors. It is your gospel or theirs. And yours is the only one worth bothering about. You must make it win."

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

When Phillips Brooks was asked what he would do if he became a minister of a dead or dying church he replied, "Take up a collection for foreign missions." There are introverted churches and extroverted, as there are individuals in both psychological classifications. The introverted can be changed.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide;  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil  
side,  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah . . . .

The minister in a self-centered church whose eyes are turned in upon its own program must try to lift up the eyes of his people to the hills whence cometh their strength. Without a vision the people perish, and his main task will be to set the vision before them. It is of secondary importance what the vision may be, provided it is a real challenge to their potential faith and courage.

JOHN H. MELISH

## CASE 39

If a neighboring church should burn down, to what extent would you feel obligated to render assistance? If the organization served a different denominational or racial group, how would this affect your attitude?

The burning of a church is a major disaster, and presents a mighty challenge to other congregations of the same community. Our hearts should be responsive to needs. Every need presents an opportunity for Christian service.

If it were a colored church, an invitation would be given to meet in our church at an earlier hour in the morning, or at a suitable afternoon or evening hour. Under no circumstances would it be suggested to meet unitedly. This, not because they are not Christians, but because of racial lines for which we are not responsible. Even where there is a great love for all mankind, united worship would not prove an advantage to either group, when they had been worshiping separately according to their own customs.

If it were a Jewish group, and they felt they would like to avail themselves of our church for the needed period of rebuilding, a hearty invitation would most certainly be extended to them to come and use our plant and equipment.

In addition to this, an unusually fine piece of work could be done. If you had builders, contractors, painters, craftsmen of any kind in your congregation, an appeal could be made to them to render a service without profit. The minister particularly, if he had gone through a building program, could be an angel in disguise, working day and night with his brother during the period of reconstruction, showing him how beauty could be brought forth out of ashes, offering the benefit of his own experience.

This would not be all. The board would be consulted and, after due announcements, a certain Sunday would be

set aside where an offering would be taken for this cause. The people would be urged to give liberally. It would be suggested that this fund would be kept open for at least one month, and that everyone present should tell someone else, until the entire community would be aware of the fact that "Christians do care for one another."

This would have a wonderful effect. It would raise the level of the community. In years to come, men would feel that they had been builders together with God in constructing an edifice which was proving not only a blessing to the spiritual life of the congregation, but a real aesthetic asset to the community.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

The question cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. There are many factors entering into a proper answer. Under almost any circumstances I would feel that the church which has suffered the loss of its building should immediately be invited by me to make temporary use of my quarters for worship and work. But I might know that the neighboring church is better able to rebuild than mine is to help, and in that case not consider mine obligated to aid more substantially. Again I might feel that on its merit the neighboring church does not warrant help, being in character repugnant to the Christian gospel and in a sense antisocial, as some schismatic or fanatical sects calling themselves churches undoubtedly are. Still again, I might recognize my unfortunate neighbor church as being quite meritorious but as duplicating the very work my own church is set to accomplish, and so I could not feel there was any actual need for it, but to rebuild would be a waste of money and a misapplication of Christian effort.

If, however, none of the above conditions obtained, but on the contrary I recognized the church was doing a val-

able Christian work, I think a real and reasonable aid should be rendered. The fact that it is of a different denomination should diminish very slightly, if at all, the extent of the aid rendered. The fact that it is of a different race, particularly an underprivileged one, would accentuate, even greatly perhaps, the desirability of rendering substantial aid; for that would furnish an excellent opportunity to express brotherhood and meet actual need.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

#### CASE 40

In a suburban community there are three well established churches, which together serve the community effectively. Another denomination supplies missionary funds to aid in the founding of a fourth institution. There is general community opposition to this; nevertheless the church is erected and begins to appeal to those members of the other churches who formerly belonged to the interloping denomination. How would you, the pastor of one of the older churches, act when faced with such a situation?

In many communities, particularly those of smaller size, the ravages of denominationalism have been disastrous and are proving one of the chief causes of inefficiency in Christian service. The more progressive denominations are becoming sensitive to this situation and do not encourage the organization of congregations in communities which are already adequately served. It is nothing less than scandalous for a denominational board to push into a community with a new organization where several older ones are struggling to maintain themselves, and fewer rather than additional churches would improve the situation. The rapid increase of community churches is a comment on this condition, and is the effort of sensible people in such localities to economize both in resources and in personnel.

Where a church federation or a council of churches exists, it usually includes a comity committee whose function it is to confer with the authorities of a denomination that is seeking to intrude into an already fully supplied community, and persuade them that the money and effort might better be expended in a really needy and unchurched place. Of course, in cases where the denomination has a sectarian attitude (i.e., is of the opinion that no community is provided with the true gospel where one of its denominational congregations is not in existence) little can be done. Such a group would give small heed to the counsel of a comity committee. But it is becoming increasingly rare among self-respecting denominations thus to disregard the proprieties and ethical standards which pertain to such a situation.

If in spite of all such considerations another organization pushes into a town, the only recourse would be to let events take their course, and to trust that the spirit of brotherliness and fair play in the community will in process of time make its influence felt, and the new and intruding society will take the place in the regard of thoughtful people to which its selfish and intrusive spirit entitles it. Such situations are likely to retard the cause of religion rather than advance it.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

Thanks to the comity committees of the church federations in larger cities new churches or missions are seldom begun under the conditions described. Unless a canvass shows the presence of a sufficient number of members of a given denomination to warrant it, the proposed organization is discouraged. But such control would not be recognized by some newer religious movements which regard their tenets as important enough to warrant independent

procedure. They also feel justified in seeking out former members of their faith by virtue of the felt importance of the teachings and practices of that faith. Such convictions are more likely to be held by the managing denominational officials than by local groups.

But the final test of the feasibility of the new venture will be whether it can make people believe that it has something significant to offer. The ministers of the established churches can resist the "interloper" successfully only by developing the established churches. To use any other means than instruction and persuasion with their own members and the public is to confess weakness and inability or unwillingness to deal with the issues involved. Many churches which feel secure are by that fact robbed of initiative and of incentives to make the best of their opportunity. Some forms of Christianity may seem to the newcomers to be effete and unable to satisfy the intellectual, social, and religious life of the community. The churches already on the ground can properly meet this situation only by awakening to the possibility of new ideas and methods in their own work. No one knows how large a church should be. A small group may influence its members to greater activity and more enlightened zeal, especially if it has a persuasive ideology.

The new, invading church should be given freedom to speak its message and to offer whatever it has to give. Only argument and just tactics can be employed. Anything less will be ineffective, and anything more will be unavailing. Every congregation must rise or fall upon the basis of its vitality and of the response which it receives from the people. All church groups are confronting today new demands for their justification, not upon the basis of their age and history, or of their reputation and power, but upon the ground of their contribution to life and of the values which

people derive from them. I would endeavor to make the established churches worthy of the support of the community, but I would not use strong measures of opposition against a new one. It might be enough better to succeed!

EDWARD S. AMES

## IX

### CHURCH-COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

SINCE the World War it has been increasingly clear that the church is in open competition with many other local institutions for the loyalty, time and financial support of the people. The realization of this fact, plus the increasing awareness of the social implications of the teachings of Jesus, has caused the vast majority of ministers, rural and urban, to take their communities more seriously. Though many a pastor responds only to the demands of his parish (and by that he means the personal needs of his membership), others are convinced that the spiritual as well as the economic and social welfare of their people is inextricably bound up with wholesome community relationships. Therefore they assume it to be part of their function to analyze and study the community and to participate in its educational and philanthropic activities.

The variety of the problems which arise within this newer field of responsibility and the evident difficulty of determining how far the obligations of church and minister extend are well illustrated in the following cases and in the solutions presented.

## CASE 41

Since you are the pastor of a church which has a well developed program and many demands are also made on your time by the membership, you know that all of your available working hours could be used in carrying on the work of the church. You are, however, constantly being urged to assume positions of leadership in community-wide organizations. What criteria can you employ in determining whether you will accept or reject a new request for service?

Part of the work of my church should be leadership in community-wide organizations. At least one-fourth of my working hours should be devoted to outside service, for this is an obvious function of the church. But the things to be done should be genuinely related to the purposes of the church, and should be direct enough in their application to real need so that they do not waste time or energy.

Aside from working hours, however, a minister has the problem of his recreation. He must keep well in body and mind. Will he play golf or tennis? Here I say a determined no! Most of our sports recreations are inexcusably frivolous. They represent imaginations gone stale. People can refresh themselves by doing useful things. Futility is not the necessary criterion of recreation. I put in my leisure hours teaching workers' classes, helping with community forums, talking at high schools, experimenting with radio and television programs. The change of pace and environment provides rest and health, without the silly accompaniments of luxury games.

Because I work best in big chunks of time set aside for big separate items, I select each year one outside project to which I devote the year. At the end of the year, I try to have my part of it tied up and ready to present to somebody else, while I pass on to another project which I have previously selected. I know that this is partly temperamental

limitation, but I also know that it enables me to cover considerable ground. This year, for instance, I am organizing pacifists into a self-conscious and strategically directed pressure and emergency group, with meetings once each week, and a program of experimentation in intervening whenever troubles threaten in our own city's life.

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

There is danger today of a minister's becoming an introvert with his eyes turned not upon himself but on his little world, to the exclusion of the big problems and situations all about him. Big business is done today through wide distribution of tasks and efficient coordination. The church can learn much from big business. No minister can do it all; nor can one church do it all. The minister must learn to divide his time and strength between his own church and the community; and he must teach his people to divide their strength in the same way. Otherwise he and they are in danger of becoming ecclesiastical introverts.

When Dr. W. S. Rainsford was criticized for forsaking his own pulpit occasionally to speak to the youth in the colleges he told his people that they had no right to monopolize him and that he had something to say to youth. St. George's learned to share their prophetic leader with the country. Any congregation can be taught to take real pride in the service to the community performed by its minister and its members. It is recorded of Jesus, "I must preach the kingdom of God to *other* cities: for therefore am I sent."

No church can do everything needed by the community in this complicated age, and of course no minister can meet all his opportunities. Protestantism must learn the lesson of cooperation; the churches in any community should learn what each can do best for some one group, and then cooperate with other churches in serving other groups. We

are at the threshold of a new development in church administrations and organizations. Competition is dead, co-operation is the call of the Lord. What the radicals call a "united front" is also the need of the churches.

JOHN H. MELISH

#### CASE 42

A common complaint on the part of ministers is that the high school provides such a complete program of recreation and social life, and preempts so many of the Friday and Saturday evenings, that the young people have little time for or interest in a church-sponsored program. What should be the response to this situation on the part of the ministers?

The Reverend Percy X. Smith worried more about his young people than about any group in the church. He held special services for them. He arranged parties and programs all year long for them. He made out the program for their weekly meeting himself. He attended some of the meetings and would have attended all of them had he not felt it wise to stay away most of the time.

In spite of everything he could do he sometimes felt that he had failed completely to keep the young people interested and at work in the church. In more cheerful moments he knew that he had not failed completely, but at the height of optimism he knew that he had not succeeded very well.

He finally came to abandon elaborate programs of entertainment for the young people. Once a year he held a special service for them at the morning preaching hour. In his sermon he told them that the future of the church was in their hands and that the church expected three things of them: to attend the Sunday school, to attend the morning preaching service, and to attend the young people's meet-

ing on Sunday evening. He said that if they attended these services he had no fear in regard to their other duties to the church.

He left their own organization in their hands, though he framed their election of officers to secure strong and popular leaders rather than pious deadheads. He kept in touch with the leaders and through them guided their organization. He encouraged them to take up the production of religious drama and to conduct forums with invited speakers. He gave them great liberty and said nothing when they dabbled in some matters of which he did not approve. He said that his wildest and most radical young people usually made the best church members in later years.

Against the weekly program of the school and the community he finally set nothing more than the simple plea that the church needed its young people and expected them to do their duty by it. He ceased to offer a competitive program.

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

There seems to be little that ministers can do, especially in metropolitan districts, to lessen the monopoly which the modern high school has on the weekday time of students. In some areas, conference with school officials might be helpful in giving the church more of a chance on Friday evenings. It should be remembered that in the larger schools a big proportion of the students do not follow the social program of the school, and therefore are accessible. In fact, if the churches do not provide some social program for this group, they will find it in quarters distinctly inferior to school or church.

Moreover, in any case, the major appeal of the church to high school youth should not be social and recreational.

The high school department, with its church school program and its Sunday evening social-discussional meeting, gives the church its main chance. If the church makes good on Sunday, it need not worry about Friday and Saturday evenings.

HUGH E. BROWN

#### CASE 43

The judge of the local court asks your aid in handling a difficult case. A girl sixteen years of age who has not been attending church, but who says she belongs to your denomination, has been arrested on a delinquency charge. The judge is of the opinion that she can be saved to society if she can form some wholesome friendships and be kept under the supervision of a sympathetic and capable woman. The judge asks whether you and your wife will assume the responsibility for her. She would live with her parents, but be required to report regularly to you. You are aware that the problem involves not merely supervision over her activities, but also introducing her to the fellowship of your young people's society. And to this some of the parents of your youth would certainly object. The judge informs you that unless you can accept this responsibility he will need to send her to a reform school. What will you do in such a case?

It is impossible to give a definitive answer to this question. Very much will depend on the character and disposition of the girl. It may be that she is thoroughly committed to good conduct in the future, and will prove appreciative of what is done in her behalf. In that case no effort should be spared to encourage her. Nearly every minister is aware of cases of this nature, and if he is sensitive to his Christian privileges and responsibilities neither he nor his wife will hesitate to give every assistance to such a person. What is the church in the community for if not for just such emergencies? There are surely people of discerning and sympathetic nature in the congregation who can be

informed of all the facts, and be trusted to understand the conduct of the minister and honor him for the course he takes. On the other hand it may be that the young woman is insincere and is only seeking the friendship of Christian people for selfish purposes. No one can judge regarding her real purpose except those who secure sufficient acquaintance with the facts to determine the proper procedure.

Three factors would naturally be involved in such an understanding of the case: the minister and his wife, the capable and sympathetic woman who is given more direct responsibility, and some young person or group, wise and helpful enough to appreciate the social and religious needs of the girl, and willing to attempt to make her feel at home in their company. If the proper selection of such companions is made, there could be no possible excuse for criticism on the part of people who are normal and right-minded members of the church. It would require very short acquaintance with the young woman to determine whether she is sincere and purposeful in her new adventure of living the Christian life. Surely some risks may well be taken in the redemptive service which is contemplated. It need hardly be added that in all probability the girl's home is an important factor in her character and disposition, and will require consideration in the attitude taken toward her. But those who have the privilege of sharing in this beneficent endeavor may well go far in the attainment of their gracious objective.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

The first concern should be to determine whether residence of the girl with her parents is desirable. Is the home an immoral one? Are there conditions there which have

contributed to her delinquency? If the home is not safe for her to live in, she should if possible be placed in the care of some competent person who might receive proper pay for providing care and supervision of her. This will meet the suggestion of the judge as to wholesome friendships and the touch of a sympathetic, capable woman. This will be vastly better than a reform school. The pastor and his wife must approach a problem like this with Christian realism and not with incautious sentimentalism. It is doubtful if they could afford to take her into their home, and they certainly cannot introduce her unconditionally and unadvisedly into the young people's meeting. In addition to the objections raised to that procedure, she might be the rotten apple that would infect others.

An earnest effort should be made to lead the girl into a genuine Christian experience. This is prerequisite to securing her own full cooperation in the program of her rehabilitation. It is also necessary if those working to benefit her are to have confidence in her. Her case should be discussed only by those directly involved in her care and that only to the extent required for an adequate understanding; widespread discussion among unsympathetic or immature persons may do great harm. When she has established reliable character and when whatever notice has been taken of her delinquency has died down she can be encouraged to wider acquaintance. The test is one of the severest to which the Christian church is put, but the salvation of the girl and the exemplification of the Christian principles and spirit can be secured if some such course as the one outlined here is pursued.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

## CASE 44

Many rural towns as well as urban communities are confronted with the problem of the dance hall in the open country community. Assume that you are the pastor in a small town and learn that a notorious and callous man is building a dance hall five miles from your town, and at a similar distance from three other villages. In spite of protests, the building is erected and young people are flocking to the dances. There has been drinking and frequently young people do not return home until early in the morning. Many of the better people view the establishment as a moral hazard for the whole community. What is the responsibility of the church and its minister?

Young people may patronize an objectionable, commercialized dance hall simply because there is nowhere else to go for the social contacts which they naturally crave. The community has failed to recognize its own responsibility for the provision of a healthy kind of social life. In this case, the church itself should boldly enter the field of popular amusement, claiming the whole of life as its province. Ideally, all the churches of the community should unite in this undertaking, in cooperation perhaps with other agencies. In many instances the church building cannot properly be used for any kind of social function: there is no parish house, only a sanctuary and a few small rooms for religious instruction. But the schoolhouse, even in rural communities, may have a large social room; or the building occupied by some fraternal organization. This might be secured for dances and other social functions held under the auspices of the church or churches. Or, no public building being available, private homes could be used — if necessary, the parsonage. In any case, the popular amusement thus offered could be made at once wholesome and attractive; provided only that the young people themselves were

consulted, trusted, and given a chance to cooperate in the erection of standards and the enforcement of prohibitions. Also, it could be made to pay for itself.

ERNEST F. TITTLE

The automobile has brought the roadside tavern and the dance hall close to the small town as well as to the large city. It has become a social practice among young people to frequent such places which, when they are run by callous and selfish men, wreck the lives of young people. What is a minister to do if he is convinced that the youth of his church are being hurt?

A few years ago the Metropolitan Opera Company produced a typical American opera. It told the story of an early colony in New England, established by those who had come to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. A group of young people found a clearing, set up a Maypole and began to dance. Their elders learned of it, went to the Maypole, hacked it down, and slew their own sinful children. The author of that opera, written at the time of prohibition's repeal, was implying that religion would change any rosy atmosphere to gray, and that the church would suppress every desire for pleasure. Unfortunately that opinion still prevails, and a minister may be accused of opposing any good time on the part of young people when he attacks the tavern and the dance hall. He must be sure that some other entertainment can be provided; he can never take a purely negative attitude with reference to worldly pleasures. If he can point to other and wholesome community entertainment then he can proceed with his plan to draw his young people away from objectionable places.

Two things I would suggest to him. Let him first find

out how other ministers in the community feel about the problem. If he alone leads an attack he may not succeed, and he leaves himself open to being branded as intolerant. If all the ministers in his community agree to stand together then the church is enlisted in the fight.

Then let him go to his official board and his women's organization, advising his fellow ministers to do the same. He will doubtless find in these groups parents who are as much concerned as he is. This is the method adopted in our modern school systems. The parent-teacher associations assure the cooperation of parents and teachers in the school program and in matters of concern in character building. With this support of the laity of his church, success will crown a minister's efforts where mere declaiming from the pulpit will do no good.

While the church has lost some of its influence as an arbiter of morals, it can still do much toward the elimination of any really harmful amusement center. There is an effective way to accomplish this result, just as there is an ineffective way to try it.

IVAN LEE HOLT

#### CASE 45

Controlled by the block-booking system, the local motion picture theaters have offered many unsavory productions. They have also put on special serial thrillers, to attract the children on Saturday mornings. Many parents have been disturbed by the influence of these pictures on the physical as well as the mental health of their children. The situation has been discussed by the parent-teacher association as well as by some church groups. What concrete lines of action would you propose?

The League of Decency undoubtedly brought sufficient pressure to bear upon the motion picture industry to pro-

duce many needed reforms. Improvement in the quality of films exhibited can come only as the result of powerful and widespread effort, but I am not certain that complete destruction of block-buying would be in the interest of the people. Local effort, however, need not be in vain. Parent-teacher associations may exert a real influence by their educational programs, by direct appeal to the theaters in question, and by encouraging patronage of the worthy offerings. The exhibitors are not as rigidly bound by the block-booking system as they sometimes claim. They do have at least a measure of freedom of selection. It would be well for families to study the critical descriptions of films, such as are published weekly in the *Christian Century*, and attend only recommended features. It is possible to discern that which is excellent and to develop a discriminating taste that will avoid horror pictures, those with bad emotional urges, those which present a direct incentive to criminal conduct, and particularly those which set up false goals and values of life.

The so-called children's programs are founded upon unsound philosophy — not that of the good life. While real reforms have been noted, we cannot assume that "all is well with the movies." There is a paucity of films suitable for children; this added to double features, poor shorts, screen advertising, gambling devices at the theater, makes the problem of attendance for children almost hopeless. Even though we may not be able to establish a laundry in Hollywood, we can keep intelligent and be alert to action. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." What is worse than the banditry, sexual vice, drunkenness, murder and hideous perversions of the cinema is that torpid, pusillanimous conscience in the people which makes for the downfall of decent society. Legal action, boycott, censorship, which are not pleasant, may on occasion be resorted to if

the situation becomes too obstinate. In any event steady pressure must be exerted to regulate the undesirable block system, to keep the evils in it down to the minimum.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON

In the block-booking system, the motion picture industry is passing through the same stage as did business in former years, when all the good apples were attractively displayed on the top of the barrel, with the nubbins and rots below. Good business today finds that does not pay. Evidences that the industry finds itself with its back to the wall are seen in its use of artificial stimuli, such as "bank nights," hair-raising "thrillers," etc. Block-booking has become a matter of consideration by our national legislature, although no definite action has as yet been taken. But legislation, however successful, does not solve the problem. Prohibition failed because men and women were not trained for it. Let us not continue to think that the question can be solved by act of legislature.

Clean motion pictures stand on merit. We should encourage them with the same ardor with which we fight the demoralizing ones. Inferior pictures must forever be "propped up." It is a game for profit, and we must train our people to see that the children are getting a bad bargain. Who will deny this with juvenile delinquency ever on the upgrade? As church, school and civic leaders we should use all the pressure possible to make the local theater owners realize that harmful programs cannot be tolerated. When profits cease, headquarters will change their tactics and the industry will be cleansed of many of its present evils. As this continues, the better pictures will be sought and the poor ones labeled as carbolic acid is labeled, "poison." Not legislation so much as education, and behind it all, trained minds and pure hearts.

As Christians we continue to be concerned about the child. Eternal vigilance is the price of good entertainment, as well as of liberty. Let us hope that the leaders of the industry will recognize it is not only good business but good sportsmanship to make this contribution to developing manhood.

The church's supreme task is everlastingly, through kind persuasion, to make the leaders feel their responsibility and this can never be done if the church continues to "harp away" instead of manfully meeting its obligation. Earnest, sincere effort on the part of every Christian, telling the world that one child's life is worth more than all the profits of the industry, will be as effective as a sixteen-inch shell. Then will we kill evil as it should be killed, through the weapon of love.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

## X

### THE MINISTER'S ROLE AS A PROFESSIONAL MAN

EVERY profession worthy of the name develops a code of ethics, which may or may not be written. The minister's code, though unwritten, is exacting. He must continue his study, yet fulfill the countless responsibilities placed on him by the church and community. He must be prophetic, but the significance of the priestly function of worship cannot be forgotten. He must be alert and aggressive, yet patient; mellow, but not overripe. Surely no profession makes as heavy a demand or requires as much maturity of mind and spirit as does the ministry.

#### CASE 46

A young minister serving a church in your city comes to you for professional advice. He complains that the demands made on his time by his church people are excessive. Calls on the sick, on newcomers, and on others who expect regular pastoral attention, preempt much time. Leaders and potential leaders must be cultivated; meetings — church, denominational and community — take additional hours. Little time remains for study. The good resolutions with which he began his ministry, to read and study widely during the mornings, have gone by the board. Now, suddenly alarmed at the gradual eclipsing of his intellectual activity, he comes to you for advice. How can you help him?

This problem of a conscientious pastor in a demanding church is one of the most serious features of the ministry. It threatens the minister's long-time usefulness, and it deters men of intellectual power from entering upon this work. The churches are partly to blame. They do not sufficiently appreciate the task of preparing many speeches on diverse subjects while taking care of a great multiplicity of parish duties. "What do you do all the week between Sundays?" a nice leisurely woman asked her pastor. He sat down and told her of his engagements of the past week and she was quite astonished and was always more considerate thereafter. Few people, without the experience of making public addresses, have any conception of the preparation necessary and of the nervous tension involved. Under such pressure, the minister is tempted to trust to the inspiration of the moment and to fall into desultory mental habits.

The early morning hours, or in some cases the late hours at night, are the minister's refuge. It is a great advantage to start the day with some serious reading, or outlining of work, in order to get a "mind-set" for the day which will often accumulate to itself useful reflections and observations. To guard these early hours from intrusion by the telephone, callers, and household cares, requires real discipline and tact. Some such plan is the only hope for continuous and fruitful growth.

Pastoral calling tends to be reduced to the minimum in cities. Parishioners do not expect it so much as formerly and it may easily become an inconvenience to them except where there is real work to be done. Of course the sick and the shut-ins must not be neglected, but a great deal can be done with a saving of time by writing short letters. Dr. William E. Barton of Oak Park, Illinois, was a great pastor, as well as a fine preacher and the author of many books. He did much of his pastoral work by letters. At times of

bereavement, weddings, childbirth, and shifts of fortune, people are especially appreciative of little notes of remembrance, and notes last longer than personal visits. The telephone offers another means of making important contacts at crucial moments. Ministers have many opportunities these days for attendance during the summer vacation at schools, institutes, retreats, and assemblies which combine recreation with mental stimulus and direction. During the year luncheons, dinners, and occasional games of golf afford means of bringing the minister into the intimate human relations which are so vital to his work.

EDWARD S. AMES

"It is a difficult thing," the Reverend Percy X. Smith said to his visitor, the young pastor of the Twenty-third Street Church. "It's almost hopeless, but not quite. I've faced it ever since I came to this city. I'm going to suggest two things, and if they won't work there is an alternative. A man will dry up unless he reads. He must read and study, but he doesn't have time for either. Nevertheless he must.

"Suggestion number one is that next Sunday morning you tell your people about your predicament just as you have told it to me. You'll find them sympathetic, I believe. Then tell them that you have resolved to spend from eight A.M. until noon in your study six days a week and ask them not to interrupt you during those hours unless it is desperately necessary. You'll be interrupted a-plenty, but some of them will respect your wishes. It'll help some.

"Suggestion number two is that you discipline yourself. Select two important weekly journals and one monthly magazine and make yourself read them from cover to cover. And a minimum of one book a week. Read it if you have to take the time out of your sleep. You can do it. I know.

I do it. But I have to make myself do it. Sometimes I have to sit up after midnight on Saturday night to get it done but I do get it done, except occasionally. You can get a lot of things done at night.

"As a footnote to both suggestions you must learn to say no to some people, particularly outsiders. Tell them to call on the doctors and lawyers and vice-presidents for all of that free work. They're no busier than you.

"If you try these two suggestions and they don't work, there's just one thing left. Move out to some quiet village in the hinterlands and take a little church. And even there they'll be calling on you to make talks at schools and a dozen other places, and to join organizations, and to review books for women's clubs, and to sit up with the dead, and to go fishing and hunting so often you'll probably wish you were back in the city."

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

#### CASE 47

Let us assume that you have just come to a new charge. Many of the members have a strong attachment to your predecessor, who is now located some ten miles away. He is frequently in demand by groups at your church to speak at their meetings, and is asked to return to conduct wedding and funeral services. You suspect, and others assert, that this former pastor is eager for such opportunities and may be covertly seeking them. What would your reaction be, and how would you proceed in this delicate situation?

It does not seem to me that the situation can be described as delicate at all. Only an absolutely unwarranted sensitiveness, which has become traditional among ministers, could make it seem so. Surely this man, who is now located ten miles away, is not again a candidate for the pastorate of the church. His recent move has made him ineligible for

serious difficulty in that regard. Well, then, let him be regarded as a distinct asset in the program of the church he is willing to help. There are speeches enough to be made — let him speak as often and as well as he can whenever any group can be induced to invite him. The relationships between families and their minister during these first critical months of a pastorate are artificial at best. What better thing than to have near by a man who really knows them, and whom they really love, ready to meet their pressing needs as only an old friend can. I should add him to my unofficial staff, disarm him by a frank enthusiasm for his willingness, and use him till his tongue hangs out, his tail drags, and his present congregation begin to wonder why they are asked to pay his salary.

Meanwhile I should resolve, in my innermost soul, that when I moved on I should move more than one hundred miles away, never come back to the church for funerals or weddings however pressing the insistence, and never preach or speak to my old congregation for at least five years after my departure. But, of course, that is a different problem, and must be considered separately from the problem the question describes as delicate!

BERNARD C. CLAUSEN

I would move slowly. I would suspect myself of over-emphasizing the actual activity of the former pastor. I would check and countercheck imputations of mine, that he was "covertly" managing these returns. I would remember that for a time it is natural for some families to seek his services. I would try to treat him with fullest courtesy and appreciation at all times. If after a reasonable interval the situation did not clear up, and Mr. Former Pastor failed to observe the elementary amenities, I would

go into conference with some trusted denominational leaders, and seek their help. If nothing came of this, and if my own church persisted in preferring his services — well, there are other churches.

HUGH E. BROWN

#### CASE 48

A fellow minister, troubled by the gossip in his community about his own family, asks advice. He and his wife live amicably with their daughter and two sons. The children, who range in age from fourteen to nineteen, consider that they are very much handicapped in their social life because of their father's professional position. For example, criticism has been voiced by the church members because the young people have dates with nonchurch boys and girls. There has also been criticism of their "extravagance." The minister feels that his young people are losing what little loyalty they formerly had to the church because of these attitudes. What suggestions would you make?

The glory of Protestantism is the parsonage. Nothing on earth is more beautiful than for a pastor and his wife to live happily together with their children. God said in the beginning it was not good for man to live alone, and this pertains to the priesthood as well as the laity. God wants us to make a success of our homes, and if a minister fails in making home adjustments, he is tragically handicapped in the ministry. I reiterate, the greatest blessing and challenge to the world is the Christian home at its best. Usually the men who have been outstanding ministers are men who have had good wives and faithful children.

The long-nosed curiosity and interference of society sometimes throw this beautiful picture out of focus. Often the minister's children are made to feel that they are

handicapped because of the father's profession. People expect and have a right to expect the minister's children to be an example in the community. However, these children, it must be remembered, are also human beings. Blessed is the man who can prepare his children for the high and noble adventure. The Protestant minister speaks with authority on all questions of the home, while the Roman priest is forever a theorist. Imagine a man giving advice on the delicate questions of the home who has never enjoyed the sacred confidence of a daughter, a son, a wife.

This father will tell his children that it is not a disadvantage, but an advantage to be a minister's child. Statistics bear this out. The opportunities which are his more than compensate for loss of "high life" and the social whirl. Always the chances for receiving recognition are in favor of the minister's children. Their ability in music, dramatics, or scholarship is quickly recognized because of the prominence of the family, where other children of equal talents are often overlooked.

Ministers' children cannot be extravagant in their habits, or use the automobile as frequently as the banker's son, or have constant changes of apparel as does the only daughter of the leading attorney. They must learn to be governed by those principles of good taste that will make them substantial citizens, instead of present-day misfits. It is a distinct advantage to be the child of the parsonage.

One of the curses of the age is that young people have had too much done for them by their elders. Financial embarrassment is not a disadvantage, but a blessing. Recently a leader in church life said, "What we need is a Moses." "What we need is homes such as produced a Moses," replied the pastor, "mothers and fathers with idealism that cannot be shaken by a false materialistic conception of life." Every child should be taught to earn his honest bread. We

are losing the spirit of the pioneer in trying to create a perfect situation for every individual. We are killing the greatest incentive in youth these days by working out their problems for them.

FREDERICK J. WEERTZ

During my long experience in the pastorate I have encountered two types of ministers' children. I could not have directed the work of any church I have served without the help of the sons and daughters of ministers. On the other hand, the most bitter criticisms of the church I have ever heard have come from the sons and daughters of other ministers. The criticisms are usually traceable to some unfortunate treatment of a minister by a congregation, or to some feeling that a natural desire for normal pleasures has been suppressed. Children resent any seemingly unfair treatment of their parents, and they resent also the fact that they are denied pleasures because they are ministers' children.

Let it be taken for granted that normal children will avoid any escapades or wild pleasures which would justify criticism. What is a minister to do when his children are criticized for insisting on the same pleasures which are enjoyed by the children in his church families? He may ignore the criticism if it comes from a few fanatics. If it is general then he must face it and decide on his course. This problem in one form or another is met in almost every minister's home.

The youth of America has won a struggle for freedom. Certainly the young people of this generation know more freedom than those of any previous generation. Most parents may refer to the control they knew in youth, and lament at times the passing of the "good old days." But at the same time they realize that a child has a right to respect,

and that they must give reasons for the stand they take on amusements. There is little disposition to say that a child must or must not do a thing because one of the parents orders it. That aristocratic ethical system has given way to a more democratic system.

When the minister has decided that the amusements in a community are not hurtful to the young people in his church homes, he must grant to his own children the right to enjoy them if they wish. He has a responsibility for other children than his own, and his first decision must be that the community amusements are not hurtful.

Then his second decision should be that his children are entitled to as much pleasure in life as other boys and girls. He will do less harm to his own children by this course and, in the long run, he will do more good in his parish if his primary concern is for wholesome community pleasure.

If the minister takes this position and there is still much criticism of his children for their way of living, then he had better resign and go to a church where there is a more reasonable attitude. God may have given him a church to serve, but God has also given to him children to rear wisely and well.

IVAN LEE HOLT

#### CASE 49

Six months ago a woman came to a minister's study asking his help on a personal problem. He learned in the interview that she had suspicions concerning her husband's conduct and believed that she should get a divorce. She has now become a regular attendant at church services, and the minister has noticed that she frequently has gone out of her way to speak to him. He reluctantly reaches the conclusion that she seems particularly attracted to him, in spite of his strictly impersonal attitudes and cool response. Her attentions are becoming increasingly annoying. What should he do in such a situation?

In his early ministry and before the appearance of the new science of psychiatry, the writer was confronted with just such a situation. What he did was to go to the husband of the woman and state the facts as he saw them. To his surprise and relief the husband said: "My wife is a brilliant woman but for many years she has become infatuated with certain men, a senator, a judge, and with you. This has been the heavy burden I have carried alone. I will welcome anything you can do for her, and for me, for I know you will not take advantage of her." Today we know much about such cases, and the wise thing is to persuade her and her husband to go to a psychiatrist. In Brooklyn, under the auspices of the Federation of Churches, we have a clinic in which religion and medicine cooperate to serve such women and other borderline cases of mental abnormality.

JOHN H. MELISH

No minister has been long in a pastorate without discovering that there are women in his congregation or in the community who are of an emotional nature and are not always blessed with a balanced mind and good judgment. The minister by reason of his religious calling and his desire to be sympathetic with all the needs of his people is in danger of making unconsciously an appeal to women who have or imagine they have some experience in their lives which they feel demands friendly consideration. It may be a sense of ill adjustment and loneliness, or of a lack of right relations with a husband, which is easily acquired but may be entirely imaginary; or worst of all it may be a morbid case of falling in love with the man who as minister makes a strong appeal to their undisciplined emotions.

A wise man soon detects the signs of such a tendency on the part of a woman, and discerns the difference between

genuine high regard and admiration, to which every sincere and dignified pastor is entitled, and the sentimental attraction which a weak nature is liable to manifest toward him, and which is his chief danger in the ministry. Nothing is more quickly discovered in a minister's conduct or is likely to prove more disastrous to his work than an attitude of softness or philandering toward any of the women in the church. For this reason the companionship of a high-minded and sensible wife is always a safeguard. Her presence is a protection against the advances of silly or designing women. Many ministers take their wives with them in making pastoral calls, and this is a wise practice. If they keep office hours, they will avoid private interviews with women regarding whose motives there can be any doubt. Without offense to anyone a minister can easily establish a tradition of dignity, detachment and reserve which is not divorced from sympathy and anxiety to be of help at all times. In dealing with a silly, sentimental and intrusive female he ought to be able at all times to count on the tact and understanding protection and assistance of his wife and the sensible women of his church. In this manner he can close the door upon temptations which have ruined the life and ministry of many a man in the holy service of the church.

HERBERT L. WILLETT

#### CASE 50

A small but highly vocal minority of the church membership is convinced that it is time for a change of pastors. A group of about equal size is as ardent in insisting that the incumbent should remain. Each group is actively working to build up support for its position among the other members. What should the minister's policy be?

"Jesus and Paul didn't fight back. They had a tendency to move on into another city when opposition developed," said the Reverend Percy X. Smith, sermonizing to his worried friend, the Reverend C. C. Smith.

"Don't preach at me, Percy," said C. C. Smith.

"No, I don't mean it that way," Percy Smith replied, "but it's true. And that's what you must do. There isn't any choice, C. C. You must go. I'll help you to go, and so will the other men. You don't have to go right now. I don't want you to resign until we get you a call. It's so much easier to get one when you still have a job. You stay right where you are and make out the best you can for the present, but six months from now you must be somewhere else. It can be arranged for you; not for everyone, but we can find a church for you."

"Frankly, it's idle to hope for anything else where you are. I accept your version of the trouble. Justice is on your side. I don't doubt it. But there are some things that are more important than justice in a miserable church row. Your own peace and happiness, for example. And the future of that church."

"You say that only one out of four is against you. But in that 25 per cent there are some strong people. Convert half of them and you still have one out of eight against you. That's enough to make your life hell and to cripple all of your work."

"And you may not convert them. The thing may go against you. There isn't rhyme or reason in a church row. Don't worry about quitting on your loyal supporters. They may be against you in six months. In any case they'll get over it."

"You can't ever be happy there again. You can't ever have a peaceful life there again. You can't ever do good work there again. Get out and let the wound heal in the

congregation. It isn't likely to heal with you there. You can stay and fight it out and maybe win and vindicate yourself. But it won't be worth it.

"I don't think you have any choice but to leave."

RENWICK C. KENNEDY

In all matters of congregational church government a majority should rule. Perhaps in other kinds of government the will of the majority would be respected. In the situation described above the minister should show a willingness to let the majority mind of the church be ascertained and to abide by that expression. If he should seem to grasp at the retention of his office, he will be weakened. In any contest in which his will is opposed by others, he should stand squarely on issues of principle, or at least on those of church policy, rather than on personal interests. Even then if the minority is irreconcilable and the question afterward is solely his retention, he would do better to retire than to divide the church or to become the occasion for the arrested spiritual development of his opponents. A minister's authority is moral and spiritual; it cannot rest on legalities and must not be coercive. If with truth and love he cannot convince and control, then his usefulness in that church is at an end or else sadly impaired.

This does not mean that a pastor should tamely yield to all objectors. The fact is, only rarely is a church absolutely unanimous. A faithful and courageous pastor will expect constant opposition, and it will be his high duty to carry on the Christian program at all hazards; but he will so live and preach that none can doubt his sincere and sacrificial promotion of his Master's business, not his own personal interests.

JOSEPH M. DAWSON



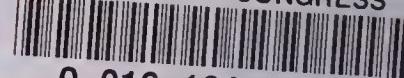








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